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ABSTRACT

A demonstration project was conducted to develop and pilot test a portfolio-based approach to learning assessment in adult basic education (ABE). The portfolio process and materials were developed under the oversight of a project task force after a review of existing portfolio assessment practices. The portfolio assessment approach was pilot tested at 3 sites with a total of 20 students after teachers had attended training workshops. The portfolio process and materials, which were modified several times during the yearlong test, were found to have positive impacts on student participation in the assessment process, needs assessment and instructional planning/organization, and student learning. Major limitations of the portfolio assessment process included the following: large amounts of paperwork and time required, difficulties in getting students to complete the required forms, and students' and teachers' problems with the collaborative assessment process. (Appendixes constituting approximately 60% of this document contain the following: self-test for portfolio development, information about types of portfolios, strategy worksheet, task force membership list and meeting agendas and minutes, study flyer about portfolios, individual student data, list of site visits, modifications of the portfolio materials during the pilot testing, and working and summary portfolio materials.) (MN)

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Madison Area Technical College
Alternative Learning Division

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT IN ADULT BASIC SKILLS EDUCATION: A PILOT STUDY

FINAL REPORT

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 1

PROJECT PHASE 1: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT 3
  Goals and Overview of Phase 1 3
  Project Activities 3
    Review of Existing Practices 3
    Design of Portfolio Process and Materials 6
    Portfolio Task Force 11
    Description of Pilot Portfolio Materials and Process 11
  Summary 14

PROJECT PHASE 2: PILOT TEST OF PORTFOLIO PROCESS 14
  Goals and Overview of Phase 2 14
  Teacher Training 15
  Evaluation Design and Collection of Dat 15
  Implementation of the Portfolio Approach 17
  Staff Training and Technical Support 23
  Development and Modification of Portfolio Materials 26
  Portfolio Task Force 28
  Dissemination to Outside Audiences 29

FINAL EVALUATION 30
  The Final Portfolio Approach 30
  Working Portfolio Elements 30
  Summary Portfolio Elements 34
  Strengths and Limitations 35
    Strength 36
    Limitations 38
  Other Issues affecting Portfolio Assessment 42

RECOMMENDATIONS 45
  Recommendations - Program and District Level 46
  Recommendations - Statewide Level 48

REFERENCES 51

APPENDIX

ATTACHMENTS
  Working Portfolio Materials
  Summary Portfolio Materials

INTRODUCTION

"My portfolio. . . is like a mirror of myself"

This report describes a special demonstration project intended to develop an alternative approach to learner assessment in adult basic education. One impetus for the project was the increasing federal demand for more comprehensive evaluations of program effectiveness. Specifically, the National Literacy Act of 1991 established a requirement that states develop and implement indicators of program quality in recruiting, retaining and improving the literacy skills of their student population. States must also specify measures and performance standards related to each indicator. In partial response to this requirement, an all-day workshop on student assessment was held at the Fall 1992 meeting of the VTAE Adult Basic Skills District Coordinators. At the workshop, the group generally agreed that standardized testing, the current primary measure of students' educational gains, assesses only a limited range of student outcomes. Further, the group agreed that an alternative method, portfolio assessment, appears to be a means of gathering more comprehensive and useful student outcome data.

While portfolio assessment has many appealing features, many questions about its use were raised during the workshop. Most of the readily available examples were based on school and classroom practices with children or on models for professional education. How might these strategies be used with adults to document their acquisition of basic skills? The desire to test the utility of portfolio assessment in adult basic skills instruction led to this collaborative project, involving Madison Area Technical College and UW-Madison's Department of Continuing and Vocational Education, funded by the State Board of the Wisconsin Technical College System.

The original purpose of the project was to develop and test a "model" for portfolio assessment that might be adopted by other adult basic skills programs in Wisconsin and elsewhere. As a result of what we learned in the project, we realized that portfolio assessment is most appropriately developed in the context of individual programs by the teachers who will use the assessment strategies. Accordingly, we do not present the materials and approach that we developed as a "model" for adoption by others. However, we believe that our approach to the **development** of the portfolio process might be useful as a model for other adult basic skills educators. Therefore, this report describes in detail our development and pilot-testing strategies. It also includes a description of the elements in the two types of portfolios we developed. Copies of the actual portfolio materials are included as Attachments. The report includes an analysis of strengths and limitations of the portfolio approach, as well as a discussion of other issues that affected the use of portfolio assessment in our pilot study sites. Finally, a series of recommendations are offered for teachers and administrators who wish to develop portfolio assessment strategies for their programs. Recommendations are also provided for strategies to support portfolio assessment on a statewide level.

We encountered many challenges in the development and use of portfolio assessment in adult basic skills education, some that were anticipated and others that were not. We feel that we have only taken the first steps towards creating a workable portfolio assessment approach.

However, we already have seen evidence that the benefits of using portfolio assessment may be considerable, for students, teachers, and programs. Perhaps the most immediate and encouraging results were the students' increased self-awareness and pride in their learning accomplishments.

PROJECT PHASE 1: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
(Spring 1993)

Goals and Overview of Phase 1

The goal of this project phase was to develop a process for portfolio assessment in adult basic skills education. Specifically, the assessment process was designed for use in an individualized basic skills classroom with adult learners at sixth to ninth grade reading levels (Level II). We chose to focus on this particular type of setting and learner for several reasons. Individualized instruction currently is the dominant instructional approach for adult basic skills education in Wisconsin (excluding English-as-a-Second Language instruction). Learners at this ability level comprise a large proportion of students served - 38% of Wisconsin adult basic skills students in FY 1991-92 were in Level II (Wisconsin Basic Skills Task Force, 1994). These adults present a challenge for assessment of learning outcomes. Learners at higher levels are likely to make more rapid progress toward passing the GED, a primary goal of many program participants and an easily documented outcome. Learners at Level II may also have the goal of earning the GED, yet they require more extended periods of instruction to attain this ultimate goal. Formal assessment of learning frequently consists only of standardized testing at student enrollment and the end of the academic year. Such testing provides learners, teachers, and program administrators with limited evidence of learning outcomes. An alternative assessment approach that could document a wider range of learning outcomes on an ongoing basis could have considerable benefit for this group of learners. It also would benefit the adult basic skills program by providing more extensive data on less obvious and currently undocumented instructional outcomes for learners at this level.

During this phase, the following activities were used to develop the portfolio assessment process: a review of existing publications on portfolio assessment, interviews with practitioners and national experts on portfolio assessment, and design of the portfolio assessment process and materials. Project staff included a project director (Hayes, a University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty member specializing in adult literacy education) and a project site coordinator (Kretschmann, an assessment specialist at MATC; in late spring Kretschmann accepted another position and Berry took her place). Three instructors who agreed to pilot test the approach during the academic year 1993-94 were also highly involved in the design of the portfolio approach. They included one full-time instructor at the Downtown Education Center (Moser), and two part-time instructors, one at an outreach site (Thieding) and one at a regional campus (Jantz).

Project Activities

Review of Existing Practices

The first step in developing the process for portfolio assessment was a review of existing practices, conducted by the project director and coordinator. We used two strategies to gather information about current practices: (1) a review of the literature on portfolio assessment and (2) interviews with national experts and practitioners.

Literature review and bibliography. Publications on portfolio assessment and alternative assessment more broadly were identified through a search that included library listings, the ERIC data base, and bibliographies on alternative assessment, most notably the list published by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Northwest Regional Laboratory, 1992). We reviewed 75 publications that appeared to be most relevant and significant. From these, we selected 35 publications to include in an annotated bibliography for use by other adult basic education (ABE) professionals. We used several criteria in selecting items for the annotated bibliography. We primarily included publications with a focus specifically on portfolio assessment, as opposed to alternative assessment more broadly. We also tried to include pieces with ideas that could be most easily applied by adult basic education practitioners, articles with varied information and perspectives, and those with concrete examples of "how-to-do-it."

Through the project, MATC's Alternative Learning Division (ALD) subscribed to seven newsletters on alternative assessment and portfolio assessment. A list of these newsletters is included in the annotated bibliography. These newsletters provided additional information and served as an ongoing resource throughout the project. Copies of the publications in the annotated bibliography and newsletters were made available to the entire MATC-ALD staff by placing them in the Division's resource collection.

Interviews. Interviews with local practitioners and national experts on portfolio assessment were another important source of background information. Informal interviews were conducted with teachers using portfolios in Wisconsin ABE programs (Judy Campbell, Omega School and Evonne Carter, MATC-Milwaukee) and in K-12 school districts (Kathy Caro-Bruce, Madison Metropolitan School District and Greg Vann, Wausau School District). The project director contacted six expert/scholars: John Fortier, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Susan McMahon, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UW-Madison; Jane McKillop, Westchester BOCES, New York, and author of a new publication series on adult literacy assessment to be published by New Readers Press (in development at the time of the interview); Hanna Fingeret, Literacy South, North Carolina, author of a guide to portfolio assessment in adult literacy education published by the U.S. Department of Education (in press at the time of the interview); Sondra Stein, National Institute on Literacy, Washington, DC; and Diane Rosenthal, New York Public Libraries, and member of the New York City Alternative Assessment Network.

Summary. The review of existing practices yielded valuable background information. The comprehensive literature search confirmed our initial belief that few publications on portfolio assessment specifically in adult basic education were currently available. The interviews were important sources of additional information about the current use of portfolio assessment. We found evidence of considerable interest and experimentation with portfolios in adult basic education in other states. However, we did not find any "models" that might be applied to the MATC setting. Hanna Fingeret shared with us a prepublication draft of her portfolio assessment guide (Fingeret, 1993), which was based on interviews with practitioners across the country as well as on other literature. Her findings confirmed our conclusion that the use of portfolios in ABE is growing but still quite new and evolutionary.

Another important finding from the interviews was the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) current plan to incorporate portfolio assessment as one element of a new statewide assessment system in the K-12 public schools, that would also include performance-based assessment and a new test of knowledge and concepts. DPI's specific assessment strategies are unlikely to be transferable to Wisconsin ABE programs, due to ABE's broader, individualized curriculum and different assessment purposes. However, there may be long-range potential - and perhaps demand - for comparable assessments specifically in adult high school completion programs. In addition, DPI's use of portfolio assessment is an indication that portfolio assessment is gaining legitimacy within the state and may be well-received by Wisconsin policy-makers, employers, and other educators.

Despite the limited amount of material on portfolio assessment specific to adult basic education programs, we obtained ideas that were useful in planning the MATC portfolio assessment approach. Two publications were particularly useful in the planning process: "Using Portfolios of Student Work in Instruction and Assessment" (Arter & Spandel, 1992), a publication of the National Council on Measurement in Education, and Fingeret's guide to portfolio assessment.

Our review of existing practice suggested at least two principles that guided the approach we used to develop our portfolio process. First, it was clear that the most desirable approach would be to ***develop a process specific to our educational program, rather than trying to adopt a "generic" model.*** This was desirable and necessary not simply because we did not find any models of portfolio assessment for adult basic skills education, but as Arter and Spandel (1992) suggest, portfolio assessment should be designed to meet the needs of a specific context, audience and purpose. Thus, each situation is potentially unique and calls for a distinctive approach. This is perhaps particularly true for the diverse settings of adult basic skills education. A second guiding principle was that ***the teachers who will use the portfolios should be involved in the development of the process.*** In fact, Arter and Spandel (1992) state that bringing teachers together to clarify purposes, audience, content and criteria is perhaps the most beneficial aspect of developing a portfolio assessment process. Such discussion provides an opportunity for teachers to develop a common understanding of instructional goals and how to determine whether those goals are achieved. Teacher participation would increase the likelihood that the process would be suitable given the existing classroom structure and curricula. It also promised to increase their commitment to using portfolios and hopefully would promote their understanding of the portfolio process.

Another important step was clarifying the definition of portfolio assessment that would be the foundation for our process. We adopted a widely cited definition developed by educators associated with the Northwest Evaluation Association: A student portfolio is

> *a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, or achievement in (a) given area(s). This collection must include student participation in selection of portfolio content; the guidelines for selection; the criteria for judging merit; and evidence of student reflection (Arter & Spandel, 1992, p. 36).*

Several elements of this definition were particularly important for the development of our portfolio approach. First was the assumption that the portfolio contents should be selected in light of an ***explicit purpose or purposes***. Unlike the work folders typically used in the program, the portfolio would not simply be a container for all of a student's work. The contents of the portfolio would be selected to accomplish a specific purpose. Second was the goal of developing a structure that would promote ***student participation*** in all aspects of the assessment process. Compiling and evaluating the portfolio would not be the teacher's responsibility alone; we aimed to develop a process that would give considerable responsibility for the portfolio to the learners. This seemed particularly appropriate in light of adult education philosophy that adult learners can and should have responsibility for their own learning. Accordingly, we would need to provide guidance on using portfolios to learners as well as teachers. Finally, ***student reflection*** would be an essential aspect of the portfolio assessment process and contents. The approach that we developed would need to include strategies to promote and document student reflection.

Design of Portfolio Process and Materials

The design of the portfolio approach took place in late spring and early summer 1993. In our initial project plan, we had envisioned that designing the approach would be the responsibility of the project director and coordinator, and that the primary role of the teachers at this phase would be to provide feedback after the approach was developed. However, based on what we learned from the background review, we involved the teachers more extensively throughout the design phase. We adapted a series of guiding questions from Arter and Spandel (1992) and used them as a framework for the design process and for a series of planning meetings with the teachers. We will describe our process here in detail, as an example for others who may be interested in using a similar planning approach. During this time, the project director and coordinator also visited each site to observe classes, review instructional materials, and generally become more familiar with current classroom practices.

Portfolio Design Meetings. We held five half-day meetings with the teachers as part of the design phase. The teachers were paid for the time they spent in these meetings and in preparation for meetings. The topics of the meetings are described below. Some of the materials developed for use in the meetings are included in the Appendix to this report. Arter and Spandel's self-test for portfolio assessment planning is also included in the Appendix.

Meeting #1 (5/11/93). To provide the teachers with some common background information about portfolio assessment, we sent them two articles to read before our first meeting (Arter & Spandel, 1992 and Valencia, 1990) and some sample portfolio contents lists. We discussed the following questions at the meeting:

1. What purposes are of particular importance for the portfolio system we are developing?
(see Arter & Spandel self-test item #2)

2. What type(s) of portfolios are most appropriate for our purposes?
(see attachment developed for the meeting)

3. What are current instructional goals in the basic skills program?
(see Arter and Spandel self-test item #3)

We agreed on five key purposes for the portfolio system we would develop:

PURPOSES FOR PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

1. To show growth and change over time
    **to students*
    **to teachers*
    **to funders*
2. To show process as well as outcomes of learning
    **to students*
    **to teachers*
3. To prepare sample of work for transition
    **for employers*
    **for educational institutions*
    **for instructors*
4. To review curriculum and instruction
    **for teachers*
    **for administrators*
    **for funders*
5. For program evaluation
    **for funders*
    **for teachers*
    **for administrators*
    **for students*

The project director prepared a list of six different types of portfolios, based on the background review (see Appendix). We selected two types as most necessary and appropriate in light of the identified purposes: a *working portfolio* and a *transition portfolio*. The working portfolio would be compiled on an ongoing basis, while the transition portfolio would be prepared at the time a student completed the program or at the end of a term. We agreed on several design aspects of the portfolios: (a) the working portfolio ought to be "cleaned up" periodically in a systematic manner, (b) material in the working portfolio might be used to create the transition portfolio, and (c) some standard elements should be included in both the working and transition portfolios as a basis for review of curriculum/instruction and program evaluation.

We generated a total of 16 different instructional goals for the program. After the meeting, the project director organized the list into five goal categories:

CATEGORIES OF INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. Academic goals
to prepare for the GED
to improve academic basic skills
to improve ability to help children with schoolwork

2. Job and life skills goals
to improve employability skills (GED component)
to improve job-related basic skills
to improve use of basic skills in everyday life (home, community)

to enhance technical skills (use of computer, keyboard)

3. Learning-to-learn goals
to improve study skills
to increase awareness and use of learning strengths
to develop flexibility in learning strategies and their applications
to increase sense of responsibility/self-direction in learning
to enhance enjoyment of learning

4. Social goals
to broaden world-view and social awareness
to improve critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies
(+to increase knowledge of community resources)
to improve social skills/interpersonal skills

5. Self-esteem goals
to increase self-esteem

In preparation for next meeting, teachers were asked to complete a handout (see Appendix) which asked them to describe current strategies used for instruction and assessment in relation to each of the 16 goals we identified in the meeting.

Meeting #2 (5/25/93). At this meeting, the teachers reported their descriptions of current instruction and assessment. We made a number of general observations about current instructional and assessment practices based on these descriptions:

1. Current documentation of informal assessments - which comprise the majority of assessment strategies - is limited.
2. Existing documentation does not always focus on important assessment information (for example, TABE scores do not document many important learning outcomes).
3. We need to gather and use other initial assessment information (such as literacy needs in the context of family roles).
4. Current instructional strategies are varied and serve a wide range of purposes.
5. There is a focus on results of teacher assessment/ identification of needs and less emphasis on student self-identified needs.
6. Teachers appear to have similar practices yet need more common training and opportunities for sharing strategies to promote consistency.
7. More emphasis on student responsibility and self-assessment is needed.
8. Little or no evidence of progress is provided by students.

This activity proved to be very valuable in highlighting both strengths and limitations of current practice. It was particularly powerful since the conclusions were drawn from the teachers' shared self-reflections, rather than imposed by an outsider to the program. From a positive perspective, the teachers' extensive use of informal assessment methods revealed their current awareness of learning outcomes and their assessment skills. However, the negative implication of this reliance on informal assessment was that learning outcomes related to most goals are NOT documented; it also raised questions from the teachers themselves about their assessment skills and the need for more training. The limited student involvement in assessment also became especially apparent.

Based on their descriptions of current practices, we discussed the following questions:

1. *How might portfolios enhance instruction and assessment?*

2. *What are potential problems with the use of portfolio assessment in our program and what are possible solutions?*

As a group, we identified a number of potential benefits of adopting a portfolio process:

Portfolio assessment might:
1. *enhance the learning-to-learn focus of the curriculum*
2. *provide better documentation of actual instructional practice*
3. *offer visual and immediate evidence of growth to students*
4. *promote more systematic assessment for all students*
5. *promote greater student ownership [for the learning process]*
6. *document the variety of instruction provided*
7. *promote greater consistency of assessment district-wide*

We identified seventeen potential problem areas related to the use of portfolio assessment:

1. *difficulties of ensuring student ownership*
2. *limited instructor time*
3. *irregular student attendance*
4. *perceived lack of relevance to student goals [i.e.; passing the GED test]*
5. *lack of legitimacy for different audiences*
6. *potential lack of consistency in documentation*
7. *need for teacher training*
8. *storage: need for additional space, separation from folders*
9. *consistency among teachers in implementation*
10. *student dropout*
11. *quality vs. quantity in selecting portfolio contents*
12. *student-teacher disagreements regarding content selection*
13. *additional student time required for portfolio construction*
14. *students' potential difficulty with reading and writing necessary to use portfolios*
15. *documentation of teacher observations*
16. *potential difficulty of self-reflection for students*
17. *additional time required for student-teacher conferences*

We generated a variety of strategies to address these problems, and the strategies later were incorporated into the design of the portfolio assessment process. The success - or lack of success - of these strategies is discussed in the description of the pilot stage of the project.

Meeting #3 (6/15/93). Two key questions served as the focus for this meeting:

1. What instructional goals are most important to include in our portfolio assessment approach? (and why?)

2. What things might be collected in portfolios to (a) promote attainment of instructional goals and (b) provide evidence of progress and achievement of these goals?

We used Tierney's (1991, p. 31) guiding questions for setting assessment priorities in deciding which goals should be addressed in the portfolio approach. We chose three goals to emphasize in our assessment approach: improvement of *(a) academic basic skills, (b) learning-to-learn skills, (c) critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies*. While learning-to-learn skills had initially been defined as a set of goals, we decided that these were sufficiently interrelated to treat them as an integrated instructional goal. We chose these three areas for several reasons. They represented skills that served as a foundation for students' potential growth in other areas; the teachers considered them to be most central to the overall purpose of the adult basic skills program; and they also felt that skill improvement in these areas is necessary and relevant for many students. In addition, our earlier discussion indicated that current assessments of these skills were inadequate or nonexistent. Finally, we felt that audiences such as employers and program administrators would be particularly interested in students' achievement in these areas. We also decided that reading skills would be the general curricular focus during the first semester of the pilot study, with the intent to incorporate math and writing skills in the second semester.

Prior to the meeting, the project coordinator compiled a list of items that might be included in portfolios, based on the literature and examples we had reviewed. Using ideas from this list and current instuctional materials, we generated a tentative list of things that might be included in our portfolio approach as evidence of learner progress and goal attainment.

Meeting #4 (6/21/93). At this meeting, we continued our discussion of specific elements to be included in both the working and transition portfolios. We also made decisions about procedures for collecting evidence of student learning, in response to the following questions:

1. What will be required to be included in all portfolios? What open-ended choices will be allowed?

2. When should items be selected for the portfolio?

3. Who will select specific work samples for the portfolio (student only, teacher only, student and teacher together)?

4. How will the portfolios be stored? Who will have access to them?

5. Who will have ownership of the portfolio? What happens to the portfolio when the student leaves the program?

Our decisions about these questions are reflected in description of the portfolio approach and initial materials, provided below.

Following the meeting, the project director and coordinator took on the task of creating forms and tools that would be used in the portfolios. We scheduled an additional meeting later in the summer for reviewing draft materials with the teachers.

Meeting #5 (8/6/93). We mailed draft versions of the portfolio forms and guidelines to the teachers for their comments and suggestions prior to this meeting. At the meeting, we discussed their reactions and agreed on revisions in the draft materials. We devoted particular attention to types of learning samples that might be included in the portfolio and how these samples would be selected. Finally, we solicited the teachers' suggestions for topics that should be addressed in the August teacher training session that we had included as part of our project plan.

Portfolio Task Force

An additional activity during this phase of the project was the creation of a task force. The purpose of the task force was to serve as a source of additional information, guidance, and feedback as we developed and tested our portfolio assessment approach. We identified and recruited 14 task force members, with representatives from MATC programs, including the MATC Alternative Learning Division, WVTAE consultants, University of Wisconsin-Madison, DPI, other adult basic skills programs, and local industry. A list of the members and their affiliations is included in the Appendix. Our first meeting with the task force was held in April. At this meeting, we provided an overview of the project goals and activities, described the nature of the Alternative Learning Division adult basic skills programs, and clarified the anticipated roles of the task force. The agenda and summary of this meeting and those of subsequent task force meetings are included in the Appendix.

Description of Pilot Portfolio Materials and Process

Working Portfolio Elements. Our initial pilot version of the working portfolio included the elements listed below. Forms or guides were developed for each element, to ensure consistency in collection of information among students and teachers. To reduce the report's volume, only the final versions of these materials are included as an attachment to the report. Changes made in the materials and how they were used will be discussed in later sections. The final versions of each portfolio element are described in the last section of this report.

WORKING PORTFOLIO: INITIAL PLAN

Required Elements

*1. Table of Contents T**
2. Initial Interview Guide ST
3. Learning Plans (initial + monthly updates) S
4. Log of learning activities (daily) S
5. Samples of learning activities (weekly) ST
6. Log of outside reading (daily) S
7. Vocabulary log (daily) S
8. Student reflections on learning activities (weekly) S
9. Teacher anecdotal notes on student learning (weekly) T
10. Portfolio conference guide (monthly) T
11. Learning Plan Review (monthly) S
12. Assessment of learning (monthly) ST

Optional Elements

1. Certificates of achievement ST
2. Samples of other learning activities ST
(student-generated questions, drawing in response to reading etc)
3. Student-selected samples S

**S=student generated/selected; ST=joint student and teacher generated/selected; T=teacher generated/selected*

Collection of Portfolio Materials. As the list indicates, we planned to involve both teacher and students in collection of information for the portfolio. During an *initial interview*, the teacher would use the interview guide to collect information about student goals, abilities, and learning preferences. Drawing on this information, the learner (with teachers' input), would identify and list learning goals, related learning activities, and a schedule on the learning plan. The teacher would explain the other portfolio elements at this time. Learners were given responsibility for keeping a daily log of their learning activities, a log of all outside reading, and a log of new vocabulary. Once a week, they would be asked to choose one sample of their work to include in the portfolio, and complete a brief rationale for its selection. They also would be asked to write a brief reflection on their learning each week, using the weekly reflection guide. Teachers would record anecdotal comments based on their observations of the student's work. Once a month, the teacher and learner would meet for a *portfolio conference*. During the conference, the teacher would use the conference guide as a basis for discussion of the learner's progress. A collaborative assessment form was designed for use by the teacher and learner in evaluating the portfolio materials according to specific criteria. Finally, the student's learning plan would be reviewed and a new learning plan developed for the next month.

Instructions. Several types of instructions were developed to assist the teacher and learner in their use of the portfolio. A guide for the teacher, "Teacher Tips," described the purpose of each portfolio element and suggestions for how to use them with the learners. We also developed a guide, "Learning Outcomes for Assessment," for the teacher to use in the monthly conference. This guide listed potential learning outcomes related to the three broad goal areas of reading, critical thinking/problem-solving, and learning-to-learn skills. Specific indicators of progress and where to look for these indicators (i.e., in what portfolio element) were listed for each of the outcomes. We also prepared a guide to the portfolio for learners and a briefer version of "Learning Outcomes for Assessment." The learner's instructions were stapled to the inside front cover of the working portfolio for easy reference, and pointed out by the teacher during the initial interview.

Storage and Access. We planned to have the working portfolios kept in the classroom at each program site, accessible to both learners and teacher during instructional hours. The learners also kept a separate work folder for work in progress and content areas not addressed in the portfolio (such as math). For the purpose of the pilot study, these folders and the portfolios were stored separately from student work folders currently used in the basic skills program. Each teacher was given a portable file box to house their students' portfolios, work folders, and extra copies of the portfolio forms.

Summary (Transition) Portfolio. We changed the name of the transition portfolio to summary portfolio, to more accurately reflect its primary function. The following elements were planned for this portfolio. Forms and other materials were initially developed during the fall semester of the pilot study, and will be described in more detail later in this report.

SUMMARY (TRANSITION) PORTFOLIO: INITIAL PLAN

Required Elements

1. *Summary learning plan*
   (summary of goals, progress over the semester, and future goals)
   (written by student after final student-teacher conference)
2. *Daily activity log*
   (from working portfolio)
3. *Outside reading log*
   (from working portfolio)
4. *Vocabulary log*
   (from working portfolio)
5. *Final collaborative portfolio assessment*
   (written by teacher during final student-teacher conference)
6. *Who I am as a reader/learner*
   (written by student after final student-teacher conference)
7. *Samples of learning activities that support final assessment*
   (selected jointly by student & teacher as part of conference and labelled according to learning outcomes)
8. *Standardized test scores (pre/post)*
   (from student's permanent file)

Optional Elements

1. *Additional pieces and rationale for selection*
   (selected jointly by student and teacher according to anticipated audience for portfolio (self, employer, next teacher, etc)

Creation, Storage, and Access. According to our initial plan, the summary portfolio would be compiled at the end of each semester, in connection with a final student-teacher conference. The completed portfolio would be kept by the student, who would decide what other people (outside the program) might have access to the portfolio. A copy of the completed portfolio would be kept by the teacher and placed in the students' permanent file, for program evaluation purposes.

Summary

The first phase of the project included a review of existing practices and the design of a portfolio assessment process and materials. The review of existing practices supported the need to develop a portfolio assessment process specifically designed for adult basic skills education. It provided guiding principles and a set of key questions that served as the basis for our design process. Our work during this phase reinforced the value of teacher involvement in designing the portfolio approach. The teachers contributed important information about instructional goals, current instructional strategies and assessment, potential problems, and prospective portfolio elements. The need for improved assessment procedures was reinforced through their reflection on current practices. In general, the design phase became a significant staff development process for the teachers, introducing them to the nature of portfolio assessment, providing them with the opportunity to clarify and prioritize instructional goals, and to share their perspectives with other teachers. In addition, it enabled us to build supportive relationships among project staff that were beneficial as we entered the pilot phase of the project.

Our work also reinforced the importance of creating an individualized assessment process specifically for MATC's adult basic skills program, rather than trying to adopt a process and materials developed elsewhere. We utilized forms and checklists created by others as models for some of our own materials, but all required modifications. A key consideration in form development was to ensure their readability for students at a sixth to ninth grade level, and to limit the required amount of writing. A particular challenge was posed by the individualized nature of the learning lab setting, which meant that we needed to create a process that could be adapted to a variety of learner needs and learning activities. The lack of a standard curriculum made this setting quite different from K-12 or higher education programs, the focus of most literature we reviewed. It became especially difficult to specify learning outcomes and criteria for their assessment. In addition, we found limited guidance in the literature on how to establish criteria and evaluate portfolios. The literature that did address this aspect was often vague and sometimes contradictory. We continued to develop strategies for this aspect of the portfolio process throughout the pilot study.

PROJECT PHASE 2: PILOT TEST OF PORTFOLIO PROCESS
(Fall 1993 - Spring 1994)

Goals and Overview of Phase 2

The goal of this project phase was to field test the portfolio approach at three adult basic skills sites in MATC's Alternative Learning Division. These sites included the Downtown Education Center (Madison), an outreach site (Stoughton), and a regional campus (Portage). Specific activities included teacher training, evaluation design and ongoing collection of evaluation data, implementation of the portfolio approach, staff training and technical support, development and modification of portfolio materials, task force meetings, and dissemination to outside audiences.

Teacher Training

Our initial project plan included the development of a comprehensive one-day workshop to train the participating teachers to use the pilot portfolio approach. However, much "training" actually occurred through the teachers' extensive involvement in the design process. This involvement had not been part of our initial plan, and meant that our goals for the training workshop changed considerably. Instead of an all-encompassing introduction to every aspect of the portfolio assessment process, we were able to focus the training session on a few more specific topics.

The five-hour workshop was held on August 20, prior to the beginning of classes. A focal point of the workshop was a role play of the portfolio process, enacted by the project director and coordinator. In the role play, we modelled an initial interview, preparation of a learning plan, and strategies for explaining the portfolio elements to the learner. Other topics addressed at the workshop included criteria for assessment of student learning, a timeline of activities for the fall semester, and the project evaluation plan. Teacher journals, one source of data for project evaluation, were distributed along with guidelines for their use.

The role play proved to be a very effective means of clarifying the portfolio process for the teachers. It demonstrated in a very concrete manner how the portfolio materials might be utilized with a learner. In addition, the role play revealed some unanticipated issues and lack of clarity in certain procedures that we were able to address prior to the teachers' actual implementation of the process. At the end of the workshop, the teachers indicated that they felt prepared and excited about beginning the pilot test. It became clear to us, however, that a one-day workshop could not adequately prepare teachers to use the type of portfolio process we designed. Our teachers' preparation also included their participation in the five planning meetings. In addition, we planned monthly staff meetings that were additional opportunities for staff development and problem-solving. This combination of activities may be the most desirable approach to teacher training in portfolio assessment; as one teacher commented, the most useful form of learning for teachers may be through actual experimentation with portfolios, supported by collaborative exchange of ideas with peers.

Evaluation Design and Collection of Data

Several strategies were used to collect relevant data for evaluating the portfolio approach. Prior to the beginning of the pilot study, the project director identified two objectives and related questions for the evaluation:

Objective 1: To document the process of implementation
-how was the portfolio process implemented?
-what components worked? what components did not work? why?
-how was the process modified, if at all, during the pilot? why were modifications made?

Objective 2: To assess the impact of portfolio assessment on instruction
-how does the use of portfolios affect teachers' work?
-what impact does portfolio assessment have on teachers' curriculum planning and instruction?

-how do students participate in the portfolio assessment process?
-how do students perceive the process?

The following sources of evidence provided data related to each evaluation objective:

Objective 1: To document the process of implementation
sources of evidence:
1. *teacher logs that (1) describe how components are implemented and (2) evaluate what worked/didn't work*
2. *director/coordinator logs that (1) describe how components are implemented, (2) evaluate what worked/didn't work, and (3) describe modifications made in the materials/process*
3. *director/coordinator site visit/observation notes regarding:*
    - **portfolio contents*
    - **observations of students and instruction*
    - **teacher comments*
    - **student comments*
4. *notes from monthly staff meeting discussions*
5. *actual portfolios with completed materials*

Objective 2: To assess the impact of portfolio assessment on instruction
sources of evidence:
1. *teacher logs that:*
    - **describe time spent on portfolios and other instructional activities*
    - **reflect on changes (if any) in curriculum planning and instructional strategies*
    - **describe student participation in portfolio assessment process*
2. *director/coordinator site visit/observation notes*
3. *notes from monthly staff meetings*
4. *student interviews*
5. *actual portfolios with completed materials*

The teachers were asked to record descriptive information in their journals after every class, and at least weekly to use the journal for reflection on strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio process and any changes in their curriculum and instruction. The project director and coordinator made weekly journal entries and also used the journal for notes during and after their site visits. During the fall site visits, the director and coordinator each interviewed several students about their reactions to the portfolio approach. A final set of student interviews were done in May by the project coordinator and the outreach/satellite campus teachers.

Implementation of the Portfolio Approach

Pilot Study Sites

Our three pilot study sites offered different contexts for the implementation of the portfolio process. The Madison *Downtown Education Center* serves the largest number of students in its individualized learning center program (583 total students in the Fall 1993 semester) and the most diverse group in terms of race and ethnic background. The learning center classroom is located in the single campus building that also houses other program classes and program offices. This is the largest and most hectic classroom of the three sites, with at least several teachers and volunteers in the class at all times. It is the most well-equipped with instructional materials and computers. Our participating teacher was lead teacher in the lab, which meant that she was often responding to questions from other teachers as well as students. Intake and initial assessment of students is done by ABE project staff prior to student enrollment in classes. The learning center is open 52 hours per week. Our teacher worked five mornings in the lab, a total of 20 hours per week, along with teaching an afternoon class and other duties.

The Portage *regional campus* learning center is also located in a central college building, but the entire campus is much smaller in size and scope of programs and students served (81 total students in the basic skills lab during the Fall 1993 semester). Usually only one or two teachers provided instruction at any given time. Our participating teacher was lead teacher for the satellite program, working a total of 16 hours per week (not including additional time devoted to the project). Instruction is provided by two part-time teachers. These teachers do intake and initial assessment of students during instructional hours. Instruction is provided 28 hours per week in the learning center. The Stoughton *outreach program* serves the smallest number of students (16 total students in the Fall 1993 semester). The classroom is located in a main street storefront location. Our participating teacher was the sole staff member at the site, responsible for all intake and assessment as well as instruction. She worked four evenings, a total of 14 hours per week. This site has the most limited amount of instructional materials and other resources.

Despite these differences in context, the sites have a number of common characteristics. At all sites, the mode of instruction in the lab is almost entirely individualized. Students can enter the program at any time during the semester, and leave the program whenever they complete their instructional goals. Attendance varies according to students' schedules; there are no attendance policies at any site. The primary goal for most students - at any level of ability - is to prepare for the GED tests. There is a reliance on commercial skill-oriented workbooks and computer software for instruction; teachers help students choose appropriate materials and monitor their progress. However, all of the teachers make some attempt to "personalize" instruction by addressing life skills and other student needs if they become apparent.

The nature of their sites did lead to some differences in how the teachers implemented the portfolio process. The teachers at the downtown and regional campuses often were able to schedule separate conferences with students when other teachers were available to handle classroom instruction. The outreach teacher had less access to curriculum materials to address instructional goals outlined in the portfolio.

Identification of Student Participants

Criteria for Participation. Our plan called for identifying and recruiting a total of 20 students to participate in the portfolio pilot test: ten students at the main campus (with the full-time teacher) and five students at the outreach site and satellite campus (with each of the part-time teachers). However, after we began the pilot study, we realized that the "full-time" teacher actually worked only 20 hours in the instructional lab (she also taught separate reading/writing classes). We reduced her target number of students to about seven. The initial criterion we established to identify potential participants was a sixth to ninth grade reading level (Level II). Since English-as-a-Second Language learners attend the basic skills program, we included them as potential participants, in addition to native English-speaking basic skills students; however, we instructed the teachers that not more than half of the participants at their site should be ESL learners. The teachers were responsible for identifying students who met this criterion during the first two weeks of classes in September. From this group, we also encouraged the teachers to identify students who appeared to have regular attendance patterns, since attendance would affect the quantity of work they could compile for the portfolio. We realized that this would create a "nonrepresentative sample," but felt that we would gain more information about the effectiveness of the portfolio materials with such students. The teachers explained portfolio assessment and the purpose of the pilot study to potential participants on an individual basis, and gave them an informational brochure (see Appendix). Students were asked to voluntarily participate, and were assured that they could choose to end their involvement and use of the portfolios at any time.

During the first two weeks, a total of ten students were recruited for participation, six at the main campus, one at the outreach site and three at the satellite campus. Identification of potential participants proved to be more difficult than we anticipated, for several reasons. First, the number of students enrolling at all sites was lower than usual, according to the teachers. Further, the number of students within our designated ability level was also low: "*Only five of over two dozen enrolled fall into 5.9 - 8.9 GLE*" (TJ2)[1]. At the main campus, many students in this ability range were ESL students. Interestingly, the initial portfolio focus on reading improvement proved to be a deterrent to participation in the pilot study. Despite tested reading levels of less than 9.0, some students did not feel a need for reading improvement and believed that the portfolio did not reflect their learning goals. Finally, evidence of students' erratic attendance, often linked to personal problems, made teachers hesitate to involve some students: "*She would be a good candidate for the project but ... she also is in great emotional upheaval with two school-age children and a pending divorce*;" (TJ3) "*L. returned this week. I had originally thought she would be a candidate* [for the pilot study] *but this week confirms that it would not be a good idea. The reason she came in was to get away from her mother and her boyfriend. She is not serious about learning*" (TJ2).

We extended the time for recruitment in an attempt to meet our initial goals for number of participants. We also extended the potential ability range of participants, to include those reading a grade level above or below our initial limits. The addition of writing to the portfolio in the Spring assessment allowed the teachers to recruit students with higher reading levels but a need to improve their writing skills. Ultimately, the recruitment process for the project became ongoing, reflecting the open-enrollment policy of the MATC basic skills programs. We did reach our initial goal of recruiting 20 students to participate in the pilot study. However, students participated in the project for varied time periods, depending on when they enrolled in the MATC program. The impact of these participation patterns is discussed in the last section of this report, in the evaluation of the portfolio approach.

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[1] TJ1, TJ2, and TJ3 are used as citations for direct quotations from the three teachers' journals.

Characteristics of Student Participants. Table 1 provides a summary of descriptive information for the 20 students who participated in the pilot study (a chart with information for individual students by site is included in the Appendix). A few characteristics are worthy of note. The mean age of the participants, 34.9 years, is somewhat higher than the average age of adult basic skills participants in general, 27 years (Wisconsin Basic Skills Task Force, 1994). However, participants' ages varied considerably, including younger as well as older students. The majority of participants were white, reflecting the student population more broadly. All of the students of minority racial/ethnic background were at the Madison campus. The average reading level (as assessed by the TABE) for the group was 7.65, virtually at the midpoint of our initial target range of 6.0 to 9.0. Two participants had reading levels below 6.0 and two had reading levels above 9.0. The low TABE score of one ESL student did not seem to reflect her abilities and perhaps reflected some confusion over the test directions. The student with a very high (12+) TABE score was recruited to work on writing only.

Pilot Study Process

Our intent in the pilot study was to make our test of the portfolio approach as realistic as possible in the context of these sites. The students who participated in the pilot study attended the instructional lab along with other students. They were not given special curriculum or instruction, apart from the portfolio activities (however, we did find that the portfolio process affected instruction, which will be described later in the report). With the exception of some student/teacher conferences, the teachers worked with the students on the portfolio activities during regular instructional hours. Reflecting the typical individualized approach in the labs, each student worked on different learning activities during the pilot study. Their hours of attendance also varied considerably.

Student Attendance

Student attendance emerged as one of the most significant issues affecting the use of our portfolio assessment approach. At the beginning of the project, we were well-aware of the irregular attendance patterns of many ABE students, and had identified this as a potential problem in our planning meetings. We hoped to reduce this problem to some extent in the pilot by having the teachers recruit students who seemed to be more regular participants. However, it quickly became apparent that it was quite difficult to predict regular attendance - and that it was a rarity among our students. Attendance problems became a consistent topic in the staff meetings and teacher logs, reflected in comments such as: "*Will call MF and MJ Monday morning to see what happened to them. BC was in only one day - she has been sick. FG and her child have been sick*" (TJ1), "*No one came for reading today. A. was at her great-grandma's funeral ... one potential [student] called to say he could not make it to class again*" (TJ2), "*L and M and K didn't attend - want them to see the progress they could be making - but they need*

Table 1
Characteristics of Students in Pilot Study (N=20)

Age
Mean: 34.9 years
Range: 19 - 70 years

Sex
Male: 8
Female: 12

Race
White: 14
Black: 3
Asian: 2
Hispanic: 1

Reading Levels (at entry)
Mean: 7.65
Range: 3.0 - 12.0

Program Type
ABE: 16
ESL: 4

to come" (TJ3). The teachers recorded a variety of personal and situational factors that affected student attendance, all too familiar in ABE. As summarized by one teacher: " *Already we are seeing 'typical' ABE situations. Our students have multiple problems/concerns affecting attendance. Legal charges, health problems in children and parents, personal problems (marriage) etc. interfere with continuity*" (TJ2). The teachers also believed that student attendance was more irregular than usual in the overall basic skills program, at every site. The reasons for this in the Fall semester were not clear. An unusually cold January did have an impact on attendance at the beginning of the second semester. Ultimately, we began to wonder if there really was even a small group of students with consistent attendance. One teacher commented: "*Even the 'reliables' aren't very reliable*" (TJ2).

We asked the teachers to submit attendance records for portfolio students, to get more concrete documentation of their attendance patterns. Total hours of attendance for students in the pilot study is presented in Table 2. For comparison, Table 2 includes attendance statistics for all basic skills students in the learning center at each site. It is notable that the average hours of attendance for portfolio students actually was much higher than the average for basic skills students in general.

Further analyses of these statistics is necessary to get a better understanding of attendance patterns. The overall statistics do not take into account the number of weeks that students were enrolled during the semester. Reflecting the program's open enrollment policy, students in the pilot study enrolled at different times during each semester, and accordingly the number of weeks that they participated varied considerably. Combining attendance figures for both semesters, the average number of weeks that portfolio students attended class during the academic year was 14.4 weeks. (There was a total of 30 weeks of instruction offered during the year.) The average total number of hours that portfolio students attended was 71.04 hours. When their weeks of attendance are considered, the portfolio students attended an average of 4.9 hours per week. While not high, this appears to be a reasonable attendance record for adult basic skills students, and rather surprising given how problematic attendance seemed to be!

However, other data indicate that these averages present a somewhat misleading picture of students' actual participation. First, the students varied considerably in their average hours of attendance; this variation is concealed by the overall average alone. The average hours attended per week ranged from 1.34 to 11.9 hours per student. The extremely high attendance records of two students were identified as unrealistic by the teachers. One student tended to greatly over-report time spent in class. His teacher felt that about half of his reported hours would be a more accurate figure. The second student attended a large number of hours but did not spend much of this time in actual learning activities. These two students had the highest average hours of attendance (both over 10 hours per week). If their hours are not included in the total, the average number of weekly hours of attendance drops to 3.96 hours. Eight students attended for an average of less than 3 hours per week during the time that they were enrolled.

The number of weeks students attended also varied, ranging from 3 to 28 weeks over the academic year. Four students attended for 8 weeks or less. A number of students with more weeks of attendance had periods when they "stopped out" for one or more weeks. Eight students (more than one third of the pilot study group) dropped out of the program during the semester that they enrolled. Four additional students who enrolled in the fall semester stopped attending during the spring semester.

TABLE 2
MATC Portfolio Assessment Project
Student Attendance Data

(D=Downtown, P=Portage, S=Stoughton)

Site	Semester	All ILC Students	Total Hours	Avg. #/Hrs.	Level 2 Students *	Level 2 Hours	Avg. #/Hrs.	Portfolio Students	Portfolio Student Hrs.	Avg. #/Hrs.	Avg. #/Weeks
D	Fall '93	583	7673.0	13.16	159	2832.4	17.81	8	612.54	76.57	13.25
	Spring '94	638	9651.1	15.13	194	5309.1	27.37	7	322.20	40.03	8.57
P	Fall '93	81	1444.0	17.83	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	274.50	54.90	10.40
	Spring '94	94	1785.0	18.99	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	90.75	90.75	18.00
S	Fall '93	16	244.0	15.25	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	53.00	17.67	9.67
	Spring '94	15	221.0	14.73	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	68.50	34.25	12.50

* With lab hours greater than zero

These figures paint a dismal picture of student attendance, and support the problems described in the teachers' journals. Attendance problems affected the use of portfolios in several ways. Irregular attendance made it difficult to collect portfolio materials on a regular basis, such as the weekly portfolio samples and reflection guides. Scheduling student-teacher conferences also became problematic: ".... *we will have to reschedule [our conference] for the third time. This is certainly one of the frustrations of the portfolio project.*" (TJ2) The time frames we established for collection of portfolio material began to seem inappropriate when students attended only a few hours each week and "stopped out" for periods of time. Perhaps most troubling was the obvious impact of low student attendance on learning. We began to question the extent that many students could achieve meaningful learning outcomes that could be exhibited in a portfolio given their limited and fragmented instructional hours. These concerns and their implications are discussed in the final section of this report.

Impact of Portfolio Assessment on Instruction

Teacher Time in Portfolio Activities. A common concern about portfolio assessment, as described in the literature, is the additional time that it requires of teachers, in contrast to other types of assessment. In our project plan, we estimated that the teachers would spend about half an hour per student each week in portfolio-related activities *beyond regular instructional time*. This did not include time in monthly staff meetings. It also would not include time spent working with students on portfolio activities during regular instructional hours. A goal of the pilot study was to get a more concrete estimate of the time needed to utilize our portfolio approach. This proved to be a more difficult task than we anticipated. We asked the teachers to record time spent on portfolio activities in their journals. They did not do this with accuracy or consistency, because so much of the portfolio process became integrated with their ongoing instructional work with students. Estimating time per student on portfolio activities (either during or outside of regular instructional hours) did not become feasible because the number of students active in the project varied at any given time.

Despite the lack of exact time accounts, it became clear that time was indeed an issue. A number of the portfolio elements were very time-consuming for teachers as well as students. The teachers most often mentioned the initial interviews and monthly conferences as time-consuming. Their estimates of the time required for these meetings averaged between one and two hours (one three hour conference was reported!). The highest time estimates were for the earlier meetings, when the teachers were unfamiliar with the process. In many cases, the teachers had to divide the initial interview tasks among several shorter meetings, which affected how quickly the students were able to begin using the portfolio. We developed strategies for reducing the time required for the interview and conferences (see the section on Modifications below), but considerable time with the student was still necessary.

Interruptions from other students and staff contributed to the length of the interviews and conferences. The teachers first scheduled these meetings during instructional hours, when they were also "on duty" as an instructor in the basic skills classroom. Accordingly, they found it necessary to respond to other students' needs and in some cases to give support to other instructors during the course of the interviews/conferences. Eventually, when possible they began to schedule conferences at other times. Obviously, this approach added considerably to the outside time required, and probably would have been impossible if they were working with more students in the project. It also did not work with all students because of their tendency to miss scheduled appointments. After experience with missed appointments, the teachers often felt compelled to do conferences when a participant showed up for class. Other portfolio activities that took time during instruction included helping students complete various elements of the portfolio. For example, one teacher noted in her journal that she spent about 30 minutes each with two students one day on their weekly reflection guides. While most materials were designed to be completed by students independently (aside from conferences), students frequently needed additional instructions on how and when to complete the forms. With a few students who were uncomfortable with writing, the teachers recorded responses dictated by the student.

Using portfolios required the teachers to spend extra time outside of class on paperwork, such as reviewing portfolio materials in preparation for conferences. While time on paperwork was not mentioned by the teachers as frequently as other issues, this is probably due to the small number of students involved with the pilot. Considerable time was involved in the compilation of the summary portfolios. With attendance as an ongoing problem, the teachers devoted extra time to follow-up phone calls and notes. Finally, the teachers sometimes used their extra hours to do non-portfolio work (such as correcting papers, organizing instructional materials, etc.) that they could not accomplish during class because of time devoted to portfolio activities.

The teachers also spent extra time on activities specific to the pilot study (rather than essential to the use of portfolios). These activities included journal writing, meeting with the project coordinators during site visits, attending three-hour portfolio staff meetings once a month, and compiling data for the project report.

Other Impacts on Instruction. Using the portfolio assessment approach had an impact on instruction in other ways, aside from requiring additional teacher time. In their journals and in staff meetings, the teachers described various ways that the project affected their teaching. These included identification of new student needs, improved planning and organization of instruction, and enhanced instructional methods. These changes are described in more detail in the Final Evaluation section of this report.

Involvement in the project prompted the teachers to be more reflective about their teaching: "*The project has provided me with an opportunity and an incentive to reflect on the program*" (TJ3); "*Am getting more introspective about my own teaching as a result of the portfolio* [project]" (TJ1); "*The central portfolio concept of reflection was at least as important for me as an instructor as it was for my students as learners. The journalling, the conferencing, etc. all informed instruction because I took time to reflect when I might not have otherwise done so*" (personal correspondence). They developed new insights into strengths and limitations of current instructional and assessment practices in adult basic skills. Their awareness and use of varied instructional strategies was expanded: "*I'm more flexible in my own thinking as far as considering options for instruction both with my portfolio students and my regular ABE students*" (TJ2); "*This study has made me look at more areas of reading in depth*" (TJ1); "[The project] *has helped me grow professionally, vary my instruction, and enriched the facility in which I teach*" (TJ3). Each teacher identified new instructional strategies that they planned to use with their students at the conclusion of the project. One teacher, for example, stated that she would now integrate writing and reading instruction much more closely. Their comments also reflected a new belief in the value of alternative approaches to documenting student learning. They saw evidence of progress not typically assessed: "*As I looked over the latest portfolio asssessment,* *I see documented evidence of growth and accomplishment that would not be indicated through the traditional 'workbook' format of learning*" (TJ3). They described strategies that they would use with other students to collect such evidence, even if the portfolio approach proved to be impractical: "*After vacation we would begin a structured program where we would document and show progress. These ideas have sprung from the project - recording and evaluating outside reading in an organized way and asssessing other work*" (TJ2). They also indicated a desire to improve students' ability to assess their learning: "*I also will work more on student input and self evaluation. I felt increased self analysis and introspection were the strongest part of the project for students*" (TJ1).

Student Participation. Our portfolio assessment approach is intended to support student participation in assessment of their learning. Students as well as teachers are involved in the development of learning plans and the assessment of learning. Students have primary responsibility for several elements, such as the learning activity log, the outside reading and writing logs, and the selection of learning samples. A key evaluation concern was to determine how students actually participated in this process, and their perceptions of the portfolio. We found that students varied considerably in their use of the portfolio materials and their feelings about the process. While the individual forms appeared to be clear and usable, some students found the sheer number of forms to be unmanageable. Some students found certain aspects of the portfolio to be difficult, such as the reflection guides. The writing necessary for some elements was challenging and intimidating for some students. Many students expressed enthusiasm over various aspects of the portfolio process, particularly the concrete evidence of progress that they obtained. Student participation is discussed in more detail in the Final Evaluation section of this report.

Staff Training and Technical Support

Monthly Staff Meetings

Staff meetings were held once a month throughout the pilot study. These meetings allowed us to monitor the process of implementation and problem-solve when necessary. We also used the meetings to disseminate newly developed materials to the teachers (see below). The meetings became an important source of collegial support for the teachers as they shared positive and negative experiences related to using the portfolios. The meetings also became an opportunity for the teachers to share teaching strategies and resources beyond the use of portfolios, and enhanced their instruction more broadly. A brief summary of the focus and outcomes of each meeting is provided below.

Staff Meeting #1 (9/24/93). We began our first meeting with an open discussion of the teachers' initial experiences with the portfolio process (this type of discussion proved to be so valuable that it became the way we began every meeting). The September meeting was held about two weeks after the teachers had begun recruiting students for the pilot study. Difficulties in recruiting students were a major topic of discussion. We also discussed the initial interview process and concerns about the length of time involved. We asked the teachers to bring current student portfolios to the meeting and we reviewed these as a group, discussing strategies to ensure that students and teachers completed the forms appropriately. Finally, the project director and coordinator did a role play of the monthly portfolio conference, to prepare the teachers for their first conferences in October.

Staff Meeting #2 (10/22/93). Several issues emerged from the teachers' reports. They identified aspects of the portfolio that seemed difficult for students, such as planning learning activities for their next time in class. Some students were forgetting to do the logs and reflections on a regular basis. The impact of irregular attendance was identified as a growing problem. The teachers had completed some monthly conferences and discussed the length of time required to complete the conference. We reviewed the summary portfolio materials and process. In light of the irregular attendance and recruitment problems, we decided that the teachers should do summary portfolios in December only with students who did not plan to return in the spring semester.

Staff Meeting #3 (11/13/93). Our major focus at this meeting was planning the writing component of the portfolio. We brainstormed a list of writing-related instructional goals, and asked the teachers to describe how they currently taught writing and assessed students' writing abilities. Some key issues pertinent to the use of portfolios emerged from their discussion: no standard initial writing assessment was used; writing was often taught as a set of skills rather than as a process; and writing was not well-integrated with reading instruction.

Staff Meeting #4 (12/17/93). The agenda for this meeting included a general discussion of the first semester of the pilot study and specific changes that might be made in the portfolio materials and process. Recruiting appropriate students for the pilot was a key problem, but the teachers were hopeful that the inclusion of writing assessment would make the portfolio relevant for more students. We identified several other problems that affected the success of the portfolio, including (a) irregular/low attendance, (b) limited one-to-one teacher-student time and time for record-keeping follow-up, (c) students' lack of perceived need to improve reading skills, (d) gaps in curricula, and (e) the general instructional focus on the GED. We noted ways that the portfolio was changing instruction. We discussed a variety of form revisions, which were made prior to the beginning of the second semester.

Staff Meeting #5 (1/21/94). At this meeting, we distributed and discussed the revised portfolio materials, which now incorporated writing assessment. Our review of the students' portfolios over break indicated that students frequently did not use the materials regularly or fill out forms completely. We asked the teachers to monitor the students' portfolios more closely and to give students more guidance and feedback on their reflections and self-assessments. We also discussed documentation of progress on the collaborative assessment form, and shared examples of ways to describe evidence of student learning.

Staff Meeting #6 (3/4/94). Recruitment of students continued to be a problem, despite the teachers' optimism prior to the semester. Many new enrollees were students with higher level skills who were focused on earning the GED by the end of the semester. The teachers reported numerous positive outcomes for students participating in the pilot. However, students continued to struggle with reflection and the number of forms in the portfolio. The teachers reported various strategies they were using to manage the "paper" in the portfolio. We did more training in the use of the collaborative assessment form, focusing on writing outcomes. We developed a sample scenario exercise that involved the teachers in reviewing student materials, evaluating the materials, and documenting progress. This exercise revealed many differences in how staff interpreted changes and in what was recorded. It also suggested that the list of potential outcomes on our assessment form was incomplete, and that other outcomes might also be important to document.

Staff Meeting #7 (3/25/94). The teachers shared a number of stories from their work with students on the portfolios. While the number of active student participants was small at this time, new insights continued to emerge from the teachers' observations. We discussed the results of the mid-semester portfolio conferences. The teachers expressed an increasing awareness of a need to develop students' abilities to set learning goals and to engage in self-reflection. With the end of the semester approaching, we decided to end any attempts to recruit new students for the project.

Staff Meeting #8 (4/22/94). A main goal of this meeting was to ensure that the teachers were prepared to complete the summary portfolios with all students currently participating in the pilot study. As we reviewed the materials and process, we were able to identify and address several points of confusion or difficulty. It became evident that the summary portfolio would require considerable teacher and student time in organizing materials and preparing the final document, as well as in discussion of the students'progress.

Staff Meeting #9 (5/13/94). Considerable time at this meeting was consumed by general wrap-up activities, such as collecting all portfolios and other project materials. We gave the teachers certificates of recognition and books to distribute to students who participated in the project. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to evaluation of the project. We asked the teachers to reflect on the most important things they learned from the project, how portfolios affected their work, including impact on curriculum and instruction, and how students participated in the portfolio process. Their comments are incorporated into the final section of this report.

Staff Meeting #10 (5/25/94). At the request of the teachers, we scheduled this informal meeting to discuss how they might use aspects of the portfolio approach in the future. The teachers all expressed interest in using some elements of the portfolio in the future, although using the entire process did not seem feasible given existing constraints of the learning center. Several elements that they felt could be adapted most easily included the learning plan, the outside reading log and the vocabulary log. They also felt that planning regular - but brief - conferences with students to discuss goals and progress was something that they would attempt to do in the future. The teachers were generally very positive about their participation in the project, despite some of the frustrations they encountered. They felt that our meetings were a valuable source of support and professional development. One teacher observed: "*Teacher collaboration and sharing time are essentials. Sharing time is best when there is direction and a leader or overview towards problem-solving versus simply whining and complaining. This project was so useful because the emphasis was on preselected problem-solving situations*" (personal correspondence).

Site Visits

Another source of technical assistance for the teachers were site visits made by the project director and coordinator. A total of 25 site visits were made during the fall and spring semesters, six by the project director and 19 by the project coordinator. Sixteen of these visits were to the Downtown Education learning center, four to the Portage learning center, and five to Stoughton. The larger number of downtown campus visits reflected the proximity of the site and the greater number of students participating in the project at this location.

A list with the dates, location, and focus of the site visits is included in the Appendix. Generally, the site visits served a variety of purposes. One purpose was to increase the director and coordinator's understanding of how the portfolio process was being used by students and teachers. The visits gave us an opportunity to observe portfolio interviews and conferences, review portfolio materials, and talk with students and teachers. Both the director and coordinator also completed some or all of several portfolio interviews and conferences with students. This experience gave us considerable insight into the effectiveness of the process. It also enabled us to assist the teachers when they had questions about the procedures.

Development and Modification of Portfolio Materials

Development of several portfolio components continued during the pilot study. During the break between the fall and spring semesters, information from the first semester was used to revise the existing working portfolio elements and process. New elements were added to assess growth in writing abilities. Materials for the summary portfolio were completed, to be available for use at the end of the fall semester, and then revised to incorporate writing assessment in the spring semester. Key changes and new materials are described below. A more detailed discussion of modifications is included in the Appendix. Final versions of all materials are included as attachments to the report.

Revisions of the Working Portfolio

The teachers' feedback in our staff meetings, as described above, were a primary source of information about strengths and limitations of the initial portfolio approach. The project director and site coordinator collected additional information about needed changes throughout the semester. At the end of the fall semester, the director and coordinator also reviewed student portfolios for other evidence of materials that might need to be modified.

Process-related changes. Several changes were made in the process and time frame used to collect portfolio materials. These primarily were responses to student attendance issues. Initially, students were asked to complete a reflection guide with questions about their learning progress on a weekly basis. This seemed inappropriate and difficult for students who attended only a few hours per week. In the modified approach, students were asked to complete a reflection guide after every four classes they attended. The original portfolio plan included a monthly student-teacher conference for assessment of progress. These conferences were very difficult to schedule because students frequently missed appointments. The conferences were very time-consuming, yet many students had not accumulated a significant amount of work for review, again due to limited attendance. We changed the conference schedule to one mid-term conference and a conference at the end of each semester. We also asked the teachers to meet privately with students for all conferences, to avoid the interruptions that were described above (Teacher Time in Portfolio Activities).

Content-related changes. A key change in the content of the portfolio was the deletion of critical thinking/problem-solving as a set of potential goals for assessment. Students rarely identified this type of goal in the initial interview, and the teachers expressed difficulty in defining possible goals in this area for students. We questioned whether some goals that students did identify related to problem-solving really fell within the scope of basic skills instruction (at least, as it currently is conceived at MATC). Curriculum and instructional strategies designed to develop these skills were not well-defined in the existing MATC programs, perhaps due to the primacy of other student needs. While we agreed that developing these skills might be very important potential program goals, it seemed inappropriate to include them in the portfolio approach at this point.

Teacher reports and review of the portfolios indicated that students and teachers found it difficult to identify learning-to-learn goals. To assist them in identifying current strengths and new skills to develop, we created a learning strategy inventory to be used with the initial interview and learning plan.

Format changes. A number of minor revisions were made in the forms to make them simpler and easier to use. We also added more specific directions on some forms to clarify their purpose and how they should be used.

Addition of Writing Assessment

The major content change was the addition of writing skills as a focus for assessment in the portfolio. Our initial plan was to add both writing and math assessment, but several concerns led us to a decision to exclude math from our assessment approach. The most significant concern was related to the current nature of math instruction in the basic skills lab. Portfolio assessment in math has been used to assess students' abilities to clarify and solve complex problems involving a variety of mathematical skills (not simple equations), frequently through small group work and communication with other learners. The workbooks and rote drill exercises used for math instruction in the basic skills program seemed ill-suited for portfolio assessment. We believed that only a substantial change in curriculum and teaching strategies would make portfolio assessment appropriate or even desirable.

Writing assessment presented some challenges of its own. As described above, we discussed current writing assessment and instructional practices with the teachers as a starting point. A considerable proportion of instruction consisted of skill-oriented drills from commercial texts. All of the teachers also tried to involve students in actual writing activities, frequently oriented toward improving their ability to write a passable essay for the GED test. They described writing as challenging and frequently intimidating for many students. Initial assessment of students' writing abilities varied considerably, ranging from use of the TABE language skills test to unstructured writing samples.

Since the paperwork involved in the portfolio already seemed excessive, we kept the addition of new forms to a minimum. Modifications were made in the initial interview guide, learning plan, conference guide, and collaborative assessment guide to incorporate writing. Only three new elements related to writing were added to the portfolio. These included an outside writing log, a writing sample reflection guide, and an initial writing assessment. The writing log and writing sample reflection guide were similar in design and purpose to the outside reading log and reading sample guide already included in the portfolio. To simplify the selection of samples for the portfolio, students continued to select only *one* sample for the portfolio each week, now with the choice of either a reading or writing sample. The initial writing assessment requested students to write a paragraph on one of several suggested topics, and provided some guidelines for self-editing. The teachers had the option of using this or another writing assessment of their choice. The writing assessment was typically completed after the initial interview. It should be noted that if students did not have a writing goal, they used only the forms related to reading; similarly, if they did not have reading goals, they used only the forms related to writing.

Summary Portfolio

Materials for the summary portfolio were developed and pilot-tested with one student at the end of the fall semester. Modifications were made to incorporate writing assessment by the end of the spring semester. Our initial plan called for the creation of a summary portfolio for every student at the end of a semester. However, many students had not accumulated a significant amount of work by that time and wished to continue with the project in the spring. We decided to ask the teachers to create summary portfolios in the fall only with students who indicated that they did not plan to enroll in the Spring semester or who no longer wished to be involved in the portfolio project. The teachers created summary portfolios with all six students currently active in the project at the end of the spring semester (the other participants had stopped attending the program). A total of seven summary portfolios were prepared, including the one completed at the end of the fall semester.

Three elements are specific to the summary portfolio: a summary learning plan, a summary collaborative assessment, and "who I am as a learner," an essay written by the student for potential readers of the portfolio. The summary learning plan describes all learning goals and progress for the duration of the students' use of the working portfolio. The final collaborative assessment describes the student's current skills at the end of instruction, as well as indicators of progress accumulated during their participation in the program. Other elements are taken from the working portfolio, to provide evidence of students' abilities and progress. These include the learning activity log, the outside reading and writing logs, and sample learning activities that reflect the student's current skills and progress. Standardized test scores, if available, are included as additional documentation of students' abilities. Finally, the student was given the option of including additional samples of their work, along with a brief rationale for their selection.

Portfolio Task Force

We obtained input from Task Force members in several ways during the pilot study. We sent draft copies of the working portfolio materials to all members in August for their review and feedback. We also sent draft copies of the summary portfolio materials to every member in October along with an agenda for a November meeting. At the meeting, we discussed the pilot study activities and our findings to date. We solicted their suggestions on several issues and problems, and our plans for the spring semester. A summary of the meeting is included in the Appendix. The project director met individually with two task force members who were unable to attend the meeting in order to obtain their feedback.

The Task Force members were able to give us some helpful suggestions that we used in the refinement of the portfolio process. However, it was difficult to schedule meetings that the majority of members could attend. We found it was ineffective to ask members for feedback on an individual basis unless we talked with them by phone or in person. We believe that this reflected the hectic schedules of the Task Force members rather than their lack of interest in the project. In retrospect, we also needed a better initial plan for how we might utilize the expertise of the Task Force members. They served as advisors rather than as a working Task Force, which seemed appropriate. However, we did not use them in an advisory capacity to an extent that was truly useful for the project.

Dissemination to Outside Audiences

Dissemination activities were not included in the original project plan, but became an important part of the project due to the considerable interest in portfolio assessment among literacy providers locally and nationally. These activities began in Spring 1993 and included:

1. "New project teams University with VTAE System," an article in the March 1993 issue of Adult Basic Education News

2. A presentation on portfolio assessment for the Dane County Literacy Consortium, Madison, WI, May 28, 1993

3. A presentation on portfolio assessment at the ABE Summer Institute, Madison, WI, July 27, 1993.

4. A presentation on portfolio assessment at the MATC Alternative Learning Division downtown staff meeting, Madison, WI, September 10, 1993.

5. "Portfolio Assessment in Adult Basic Skills Education," a presentation for the VTAE Brown Bag Luncheon series, Madison, WI, October 15, 1993.

6. "A Process for Portfolio Assessment in ABE," a presentation at the Wisconsin Conference on Adult Literacy, Oshkosh, WI, November 12, 1993.

7. "A Model for Portfolio Assessment in ABE," a presentation at the annual conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, Dallas, TX, November 20, 1993.

8. A presentation on portfolio assessment for the Madison Literacy Council task force on evaluation, Madison, WI, December 13, 1993.

9. Dissemination of Portfolio Assessment: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources to district coordinators and on request to others through the Wisconsin Literacy Resource Center.

10. Acceptance of Portfolio Assessment: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources, by the ERIC Center for Adult and Vocational Education for inclusion in the ERIC document system (available as ERIC document number ED362-731)

11. "A Model for Portfolio Assessment in ABE," a presentation at the annual conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education, Phoenix, AZ, June 3, 1994.

12. A panel presentation on portfolio assessment at the ABE Summer Institute, Madison, WI, July 1994.

The great interest in our work was reflected in the high level of attendance at our presentations. For example, approximately 70 people attended our presentation at the Oshkosh Literacy conference. We have received requests for copies of the portfolio materials from adult basic education practitioners across the country.

FINAL EVALUATION

The Final Portfolio Approach

The final portfolio approach consists of a **working portfolio** and a **summary portfolio**. As discussed previously, initial development of the forms began in the summer of 1993, through extensive collaboration among the project coordinator, project director and the teachers. We tried to keep the forms simple and easy to use, while still providing appropriate assessment mechanisms. Draft versions of the portfolio materials were pilot-tested and revised during the 1993-94 academic year. The final versions of each portfolio element are described below. A brief rationale for each element is also provided. The elements of each portfolio are portrayed graphically in Figures 1, 2, and 3. Copies of all final forms are included as Attachments to this report.

Working Portfolio Elements

Initial Interview Guide

The purpose of the initial interview is to obtain information on a student's current basic skills, use of reading and writing skills, learning strategies, interests and activities, barriers to learning, and learning goals. The interview includes 21 questions under the following headings: Reasons to Read and Write, Beliefs about Reading and Writing, Learning Preferences, Adult Education Experiences, Work Experiences, Family, and Barriers. The interview begins with a general question about the student's reasons or goals for enrolling in the program. The Learning Plan is prepared in conjunction with this guide. The questions about reasons to read and write and beliefs about reading and writing are useful in identifying reading and/or writing goals for the learning plan. The learning preference and barriers questions can assist in defining learning strategy goals. Questions related to adult education, work and family give the teacher information that can be used to select relevant content and instructional strategies, as well as identify potential barriers to learning.

Figure 1
WORKING PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

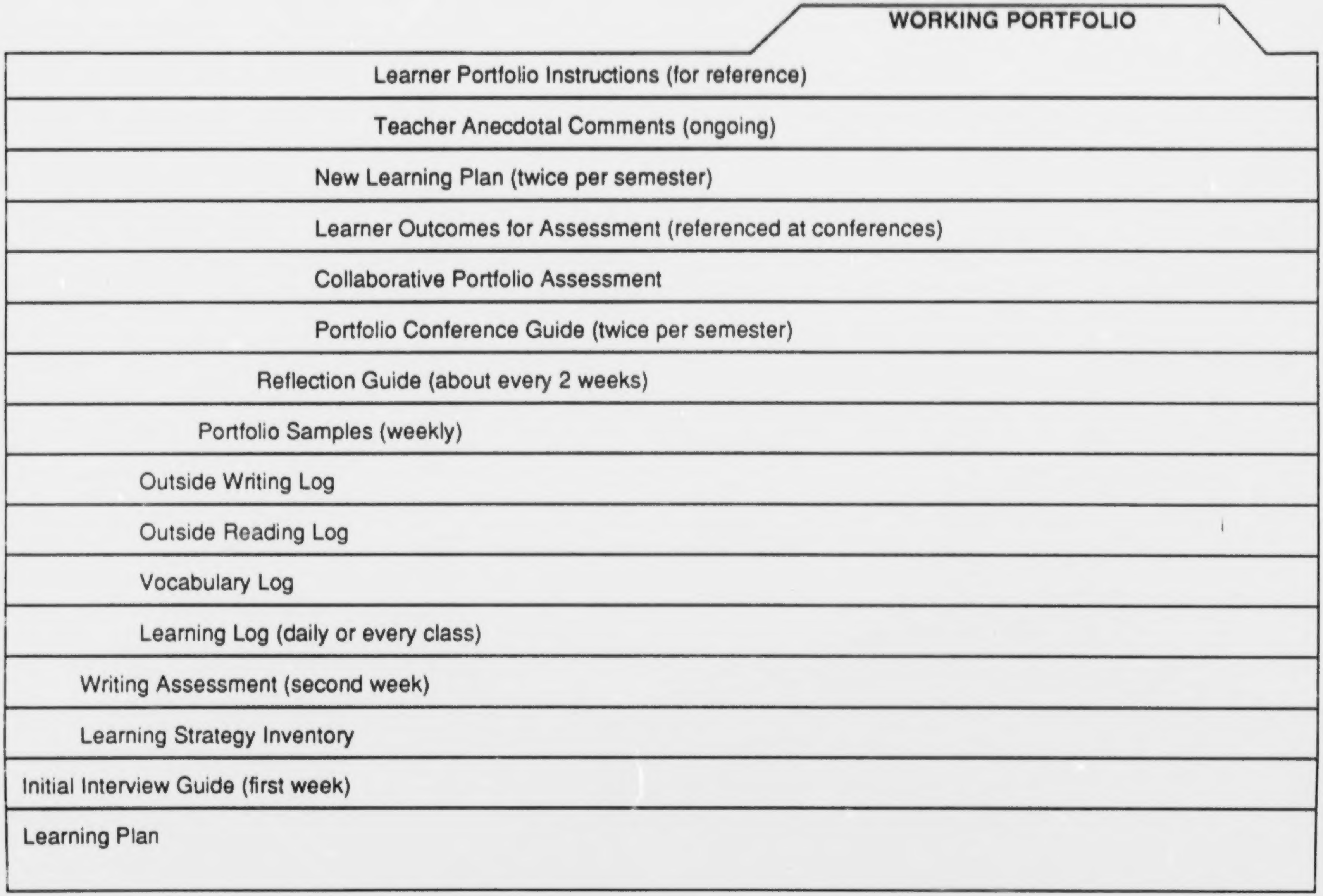

WORKING PORTFOLIO
Learner Portfolio Instructions (for reference)
Teacher Anecdotal Comments (ongoing)
New Learning Plan (twice per semester)
Learner Outcomes for Assessment (referenced at conferences)
Collaborative Portfolio Assessment
Portfolio Conference Guide (twice per semester)
Reflection Guide (about every 2 weeks)
Portfolio Samples (weekly)
Outside Writing Log
Outside Reading Log
Vocabulary Log
Learning Log (daily or every class)
Writing Assessment (second week)
Learning Strategy Inventory
Initial Interview Guide (first week)
Learning Plan

Figure 2
SUMMARY PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

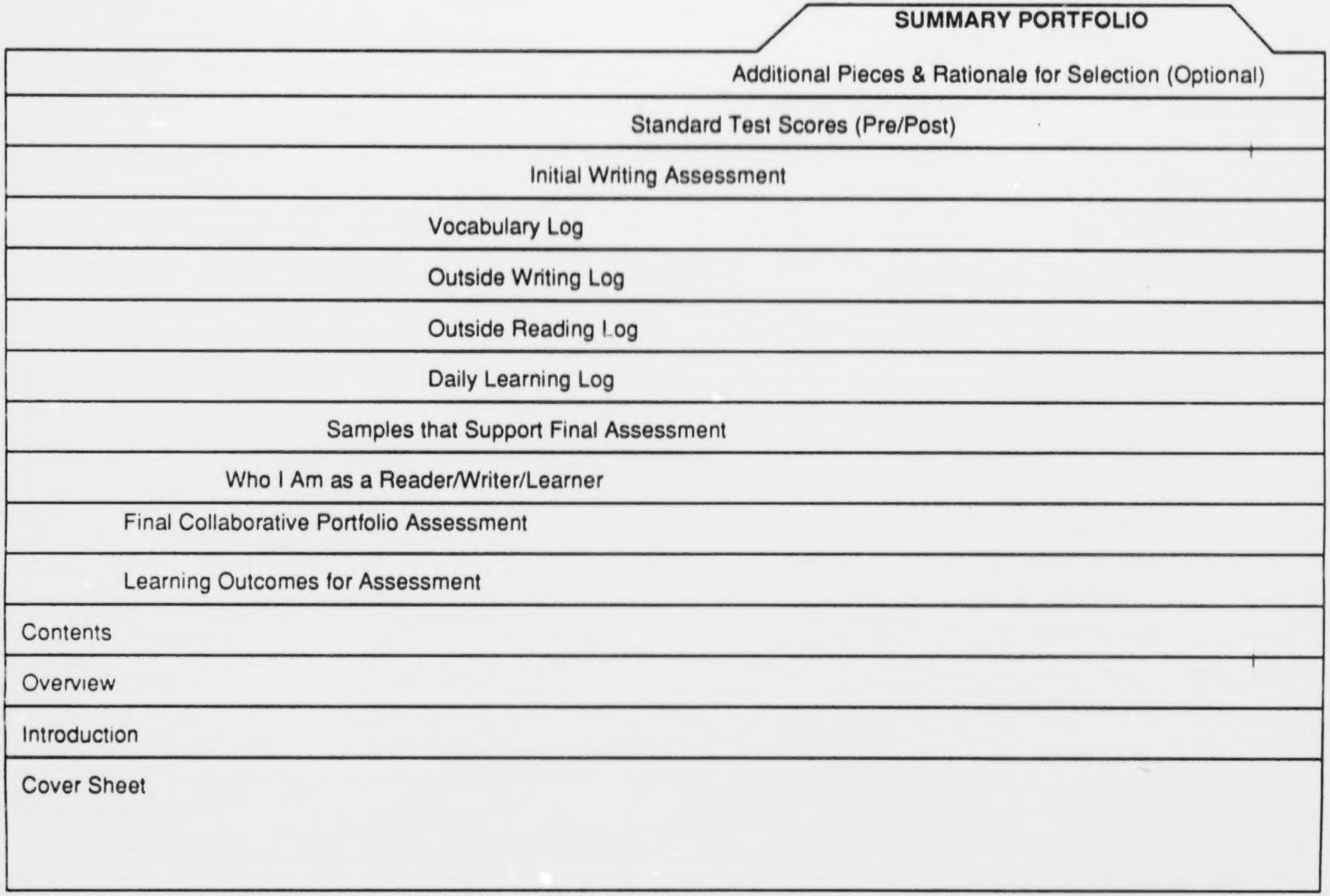
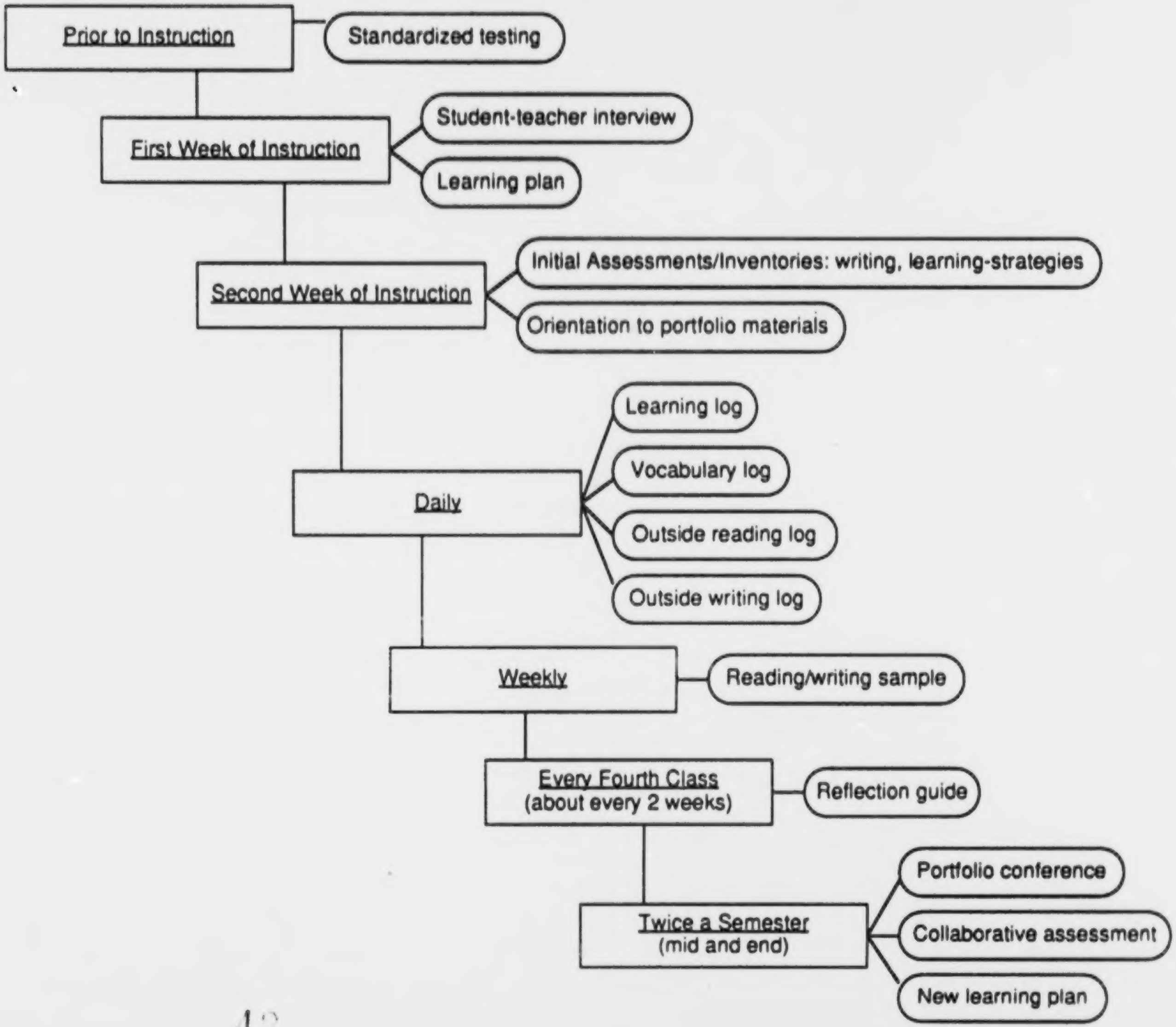

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO
Additional Pieces & Rationale for Selection (Optional)
Standard Test Scores (Pre/Post)
Initial Writing Assessment
Vocabulary Log
Outside Writing Log
Outside Reading Log
Daily Learning Log
Samples that Support Final Assessment
Who I Am as a Reader/Writer/Learner
Final Collaborative Portfolio Assessment
Learning Outcomes for Assessment
Contents
Overview
Introduction
Cover Sheet

Figure 3
THE WORKING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT PROCESS


Prior to Instruction
Standardized testing
First Week of Instruction
Student-teacher interview
Learning plan
Second Week of Instruction
Initial Assessments/Inventories: writing, learning-strategies
Orientation to portfolio materials
Daily
Learning log
Vocabulary log
Outside reading log
Outside writing log
Weekly
Reading/writing sample
Every Fourth Class
(about every 2 weeks)
Reflection guide
Twice a Semester
(mid and end)
Portfolio conference
Collaborative assessment
New learning plan

Learning Plan

The learning plan asks the student to set short-term learning goals for one to two months. We felt that such goal-setting promotes realistic expectations and in other ways contributes to a successful learning experience. The plan outlines three general goals identified by the teachers as central in their adult basic education settings: Reading Goals, Writing Goals, and Learning Strategy Goals. Within these areas, the student identifies specific learning goals, such as reading a manual at work, writing an essay for the GED test, or taking notes. As mentioned above, the initial interview can suggest many goals. The form does not require students to identify goals in all areas. A fourth category, Other Goals, is provided for goals not related to reading, writing or learning strategies. For each goal, the student writes a general plan for how and when they will accomplish each goal. Progress toward each goal is documented on the plan when the teacher and student meet for a portfolio conference approximately one to two months later.

Initial Writing Assessment

The initial writing assessment provides a writing sample which can indicate strengths, weaknesses, and assist in identifying writing goals. The writing sample also serves as a basis for comparison with future samples to assess progress. The student is asked to write a paragraph about one of the following topics: reasons for continuing his/her education, a controversial issue, or an important personal experience. Guiding questions for editing are provided to inform students of the criteria that will be used to evaluate the samples. Students usually will complete this assessment during their first week of classes.

Learning Strategy Inventory

This optional inventory helps students identify learning strategies that they currently use and new ones they might like to try. The inventory was developed because both teachers and students had difficulty defining learning strategy goals. Learning strategies on the inventory were broadly defined as things that "help you learn". The inventory includes 28 strategies such as plan my homework, ask questions, skim/scan, and preview material. The strategies that the student has an interest in using can become learning strategy goals.

Learning Log

The learning log encourages the learner to take responsibility for planning and recording their learning activities. The log has four columns for the date, learning activities done today, comments, and plans for next time. The form also includes a reminder for the student to complete a reflection guide after every fourth class session attended. The log helps both teacher and student keep track of what is actually accomplished and plan future activities appropriately.

Outside Reading Log

The outside reading log helps learners see that reading is a part of their daily activities and encourages reading beyond class assignments. The log has three columns: Date, Type of Reading, and Number of Pages/Length Read. To keep the record manageable, the student records only reading that they identify as new and/or important. Examples of reading that might be recorded are novels, forms, work manuals, or children's schoolwork. The log can be used as evidence of progress, such as greater variety or amount of reading. The form might be used at home by the student and returned at conference time.

Outside Writing Log

Similar to the outside reading log, the outside writing log helps learners see how they use writing in their daily lives and encourages them to use new writing skills outside of class. The form has three columns: Date, What I Wrote, and Purpose for Writing. The student records only writing that they identify as new and/or important. The log can be used as evidence of progress, such as writing for different purposes or in different forms.

Vocabulary Log

The vocabulary log provides a record of unfamiliar words identified by the learner and where these words were encountered. Improved vocabulary knowledge can be an important goal for students at Level II. The form has four columns: Date, New Word, Text Found, Meaning of Word. The learner can refer back to the log for the meaning of new words. The form is meant to be used according to student need and preference. It provides evidence of growth in vocabulary knowledge for assessment purposes.

Teacher Anecdotal Comments

The teacher anecdotal comments form is used by the teacher to document educational events, processes or products that are significant for each learner, or to record other information pertinent to the learner's progress. It is used for description, **not** for evaluative comments. The form has four columns: Date, O=Observation/R=Review, Observed Learning Event/Reviewed Learning Product, and Specific Student Performance. This form is used periodically for each student as a means of documenting student learning not otherwise reflected in the portfolio. Students are encouraged to read their teacher's comments and are given access to the form at any time.

Portfolio Sample Reflection Guides

The portfolio reflection guides assist students in reflecting on their reading and writing activities, and in providing a reason for their choice of samples. There are two guides, one for reading and one for writing samples. Each week, the student chooses one reading or writing sample for the portfolio. Students choose whatever reading or writing sample is important to them that week, but they are encouraged to vary the type of sample from week to week. To help the student to select varied samples, the guides' directions provide examples of three different types of reading (reading for enjoyment, reading for information, instructional reading) and four types of writing (personal writing, practical writing, instructional writing activities, essay writing). The actual sample material or a xeroxed copy (in the case of long readings, the title page and/or table of contents could be used) is attached to the reflection guide and placed in the portfolio. Drafts of writing samples as well as final versions might be included. Each guide has three questions; on both forms the first question is "Why I chose this sample for my portfolio." The other two questions prompt the student to assess their learning. The responses on the guide can be as brief or as long as the student wishes. The student's responses can be used as evidence of growth in self-assessment, reading and writing abilities, and critical thinking skills.

Reflection Guide

The more general reflection guide supports student reflection on their learning over a longer period of time. The reflection guide is a tool for regular and continuous assessment of progress. It requires students to identify their strengths and limitations, and serves as a means of developing self-assessment skills. The guide has five questions and is completed by the student after every fourth class. Similar to the sample reflection guides, the students' responses on this guide can be used as evidence of growth in self-assessment, reading and writing abilities, and critical thinking skills.

Learner Outcomes for Assessment Guide

This guide is stapled to the front of the portfolio for the student's reference. The guide describes potential learning outcomes that might be used as the basis for evaluating student progress. The guide outlines three broad areas of learning that are central to the goals of the basic skills program: basic reading skills, basic writing skills and learning-how-to-learn skills. A list of more specific skills or abilities is provided for each broader area. Examples of progress are described for each specific skill/ability. The teacher reviews the guide with the student at the beginning of instruction. The guide is used for reference when the portfolio contents are evaluated by the teacher and student at the portfolio conference. The Teacher Conference version of this guide is more detailed and includes a list of where to find evidence and possible indicators of learning for each outcome.

Portfolio Conference Guide

The portfolio conference guide provides a structure for the periodic portfolio conference. During the conference, the teacher and student review materials in the portfolio, discuss changes in the learner's reading and writing abilities, and progress toward his or her learning goals. The guide is intended to be followed in order, with the teacher asking the questions and recording student responses. The student and teacher prepare for the conference by individually reviewing the portfolio contents beforehand. The conference guide has eight questions under two headings: Reading and Writing Skills and Use of Reading and Writing, and Learning Strategies. The questions encourage review of each form in the portfolio and assist identification of specific changes in reading, writing, and learning-to-learn skills. The student's responses in the conference themselves can be used as evidence of progress.

Collaborative Portfolio Assessment Guide

The collaborative assessment guide provides a framework for assessment during the portfolio conference and a record of learning outcomes. The form lists the potential learning outcomes described on the Learner Outcomes for Assessment guide. The meaning of each outcome is reviewed with the student prior to assessment. The learner and the teacher identify relevant learning outcomes in the first column of the form. A distinction can be made among outcomes identified as relevant by both learner and teacher and by learner or teacher separately. Students and teachers are encouraged to be selective and focus the assessment on a small number of the potential outcomes. For outcomes NOT selected, teachers may note on the form why they were not selected. To make the process more manageable, each set of learning outcomes (reading, writing, learning-to-learn) should be assessed as a group, prior to reviewing the next set. The teacher and student refer to the portfolio conference guide and all other portfolio materials to identify indicators of progress and supporting evidence. A section for teacher and student comments can be used for reactions to the process of assessment, how it was helpful or not helpful, other information pertinent to the student's progress, and recommendations for future learning activities. Finally, the form can help the teacher and student identify skills or abilities as learning goals for the following period of instruction. The learning plan is reviewed at this time and progress documented for each of the student's previous goals. A new learning plan is prepared for the next learning period, including previously stated goals or new goals which might have been identified through collaborative assessment.

Summary Portfolio Elements

Summary Learning Plan

The summary learning plan is similar in format to the learning plan in the working portfolio. It summarizes the student's goals and progress for the entire period of enrollment, and describes the student's future goals.

Who I am as a reader/writer/learner

This is an essay written by the student at the conclusion of or after the summary portfolio conference. The purpose of the essay is to give the student an opportunity to describe themselves as a reader, writer and learner for others who might look at the summary portfolio (teachers, employers, family, etc.). The essay directions suggest that students might describe what the summary portfolio reveals about them as a learner, their strengths, what they have learned, and/or their future goals. The essay gives the student another opportunity for self-reflection.

Summary Collaborative Portfolio Assessment

The summary collaborative assessment is similar to the working portfolio collaborative assessment form. However, indicators of the student's current skill level as well as progress are described for each learning outcome. The form includes a section only for the teacher's summary comments; the student's comments are expressed in the "Who I am as a reader/writer/learner" essay. The teacher's version of the learning outcomes for assessment guide is included in the portfolio to give readers a better understanding of each potential learning outcome.

Portfolio Samples (including Reflection Guides, Initial Interview, Portfolio Conference Guides, Inventories)

Appropriate working portfolio samples such as reflection guides, reading and/or writing samples, past portfolio conference guides, the initial interview and/or inventories may be included in the student's summary portfolio if they provide evidence to support the outcomes assessed in the final collaborative assessment. They are labelled with white stickers to identify the learning outcome that is demonstrated in the document.

Additional Sample Rationale
Students may include samples of work that do not directly support the collaborative assessment yet that are important from the student's perspective. The student responds to three questions on the additional sample rationale form: "Why I chose the sample for my summary portfolio, "How this sample is similar or different from other pieces in the portfolio", "What this sample shows about me as a reader, writer and/or learner". Students are asked to complete this form for each additional sample they choose to include in the summary portfolio.

Learning Log
Outside Reading Log
Outside Writing Log
Vocabulary Log
Initial Writing Assessment
The four working portfolio logs and the writing assessment are included in the summary portfolio to provide general information about the student's learning activities and progress. They indicate the student's attendance patterns, record keeping abilities, beginning writing skills, subject areas studied, as well as personal interests. These forms can also be labelled with stickers as supporting evidence for outcomes evaluated in the collaborative assessment.

Standardized test scores (pre and post)
Standardized testing is required for all ABE students at MATC at the beginning and end of instruction. These scores, usually from the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), are included in the summary portfolio as additional evidence of students' progress and current skills.

In our approach, we decided that the completed summary portfolio should be kept by the student. The student would decide who, outside the program, is allowed to review the summary portfolio. A copy of the entire summary portfolio would be kept by the program for program evaluation purposes. Eventually, summary portfolios might become a part of students' permanent files.

Strengths and Limitations

Based on the pilot study, we identified a number of strengths and limitations of this portfolio assessment approach in the adult basic skills lab setting. Several factors affected our evaluation of these strengths and limitations. First was our definition of portfolio assessment. As noted earlier, this definition stipulated that portfolio materials should be selected to accomplish a specific purpose; students should participate in all aspects of the assessment process; and that student reflection should be a part of the portfolio process and contents. A second factor affecting our evaluation was the limited length of time that many students actually used the portfolio materials. A final factor was the nature of instruction in the learning center. Various issues related to the learning center program affected the success of the portfolio assessment process. These issues are discussed separately after the section on Limitations.

Some of the strengths and limitations are not necessarily specific to our portfolio approach, but might be true of portfolio assessment more broadly.

Strengths

Some strengths of the portfolio process relate to the materials and overall approach. Other strengths represent positive outcomes of using the process, including enhancements in identification of student needs, planning and organization of instruction, instructional methods, student learning, and evidence of learning.

Materials and Overall Approach

A notable strength of our process is the portfolio materials. We drew on a wide variety of available models in constructing the forms, and put considerable thought into the wording and format of each document. Through the pilot test, we were able to eliminate or modify questions and elements that were confusing or ineffective. The teachers commented repeatedly on the clarity and sound design of the forms. Feedback from attendees at our conference presentions indicate that others find our materials to be very helpful as models.

Another strength of our approach is the opportunity for student participation in the assessment process. Initially, students are asked to identify learning goals and plan learning strategies. They keep records of their learning activities and select samples for the portfolio. Assessment of learning is a collaborative process involving both student and teacher. Another strength, related to student participation, is the extent that the process can be individualized for each student. Students are not expected to produce a predetermined list of "products" for the portfolio, nor are they expected to achieve a prespecified set of criteria or competencies. There is considerable flexibility in our assessment approach, reflecting the diversity of student goals and the individualized nature of lab instruction.

An additional strength of the approach are the strategies used for student reflection. Students reflect on their learning in the initial interview, when they record learning activities, select portfolio samples, complete periodic reflection guides, participate in portfolio conferences and collaborative assessments, and prepare the summary portfolio. With this approach, reflection becomes an ongoing part of students' learning activities, rather than something done only at the conclusion of instruction or not at all. Forms such as the reflection guides can serve as instructional tools for enhancing student thinking. Ongoing reflection offers the potential for students to strengthen their self-assessment skills and their ability to express their thoughts to others.

Positive Outcomes of Using the Process

Identification of student needs. The initial interview helped the teachers identify learning needs that they might not ordinarily recognize: "*I discovered through this interview that he is without a driver's license . . . he said he didn't know he could work on his driver's license in ABE, so he didn't mention it before. To me, that verifies once again the value of the interview conference. I thought I knew TJ quite well but this, as well as other new information, came out today*" (TJ2). They also identified new learning needs when students struggled with some aspects of the portfolio process, such as goal-setting and reflection on learning.

Planning and organization of instruction. The teachers commented that the initial interview and learning plans made them more aware of where to start instruction with individual students and next steps in their learning. One teacher observed that the future goals section of the summary portfolio would be helpful when continuing instruction with students returning in the fall semester. Students also felt that the portfolio helped them become more organized: "*[Helped] to organize my work . . . to focus on fewer goals instead of having too many and then feel bad when I don't do them all*" (D)[1]; "*I liked it (the Reflection Guide) because now I've got a kind of plan for the fall - what things were hard for me so I can seek help for them*" (D).

Enhanced instructional methods. One teacher identified the tendency to "teach to the [GED] test or competencies" as a problem in the current basic skills program. The use of portfolios prompted teachers and students to move beyond this orientation. Partly this resulted from encouraging students to **identify a wide range of goals** on the learning plan. In addition, the portfolio provided **new instructional tools**. For example, the vocabulary log was frequently described by the teachers as a way to promote vocabulary development (not simply as a way to assess learning). The portfolio also encouraged more **use of real-life reading materials**. The initial interview and outside reading log made teachers more aware of students' reading interests. They cited some examples of using this awareness to plan learning activities utilizing magazines and other non-textbook materials. For both teachers and learners, the outside reading log also seemed to validate noninstructional reading as a source of learning. Various aspects of the portfolio helped teachers **relate learning activities to students' experiences**. The initial interview provided a new source of information about students' life situations and experiences. Discussions of learning samples and student reflections also provided an opportunity for integration of student experience: "*In choosing the articles and then discussing them together we can relate so much of what she is reading to her personal experience and background and build upon that*" (TJ3).

Another outcome of the portfolio approach was greater teacher time spent with individual students. A teacher commented that in the current lab classroom there is too much "flitting from student to student;" she realized through the portfolio project that she needed to spend more time with students and "slow down" with them. A number of students placed great value on the increased one-on-one contact: "*The most important part was talking . . . in interviews like this. This has been much more important than filling out forms*" (D).

Student learning. Using the portfolio seemed to have the potential to make a positive impact on student learning. It must be stressed that our portfolio approach was not designed to promote learning, but rather to assess learning. Accordingly, the pilot study was not intended to establish that students learned more because of their use of portfolios. In addition, it is difficult to distinguish between positive results of the portfolio process and the impact of being involved in a "special project" on students' attitudes and learning. However, we did find evidence that student learning might be positively affected specifically by the portfolio approach. Some students stated that they felt more motivated as a result of the portfolio: "*Before the portfolio, I didn't read enough - only what the teachers said I had to. Now I feel more like*

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[1] All student quotations are taken from interviews with participants at the end of the project. To protect the students' anonymity, they are identified by site only (D=downtown campus, S=Stoughton, P=Portage).

reading - it's more stimulating. Someone was interested in what I was reading. . . it's my own way of learning that seemed important in the portfolio" (D); "*I think the most important thing for me was the reading because I felt more motivated to read. By filling out forms, it made me concentrate more on reading things that interested me*" (D). The portfolio required learners to use skills that might not have been addressed in typical instructional activities. For example, the reflection guides prompted learners to be more reflective about their reading than typical multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank questions in workbooks. Students were required to write more frequently as part of documenting their activities in the portfolio. As noted above, some students also seemed to learn how to better manage their own learning: "*I realized how important it is to keep a record for future planning*" (D); "*I think it [the portfolio] made me focus more on my goals*" (D).

Evidence of learning. The teachers noted several ways that portfolios affected their assessment of student learning. They became more observant of changes and student progress. They also learned the importance of documenting these changes, for themselves and for students, as well as for program records. One teacher commented on the value of being specific in such documentation, and felt that the assessment forms were helpful in promoting specificity. There were many examples in student portfolios of documented learning and other progress that would not be captured by standardized tests. One learner (on her own initiative) got her first library card and used her reading log to record her progress through the first entire book she ever read. Two students were particularly pleased about documenting the increased variety of reading that they had completed. Another student who initially refused to complete reflection guides due to his difficulty with writing was completing the guides on his own after three weeks of participation. A teacher's anecdotal comments noted when a student who had never proofread his writing began to identify and correct errors on his own initiative.

Students appreciated the evidence of progress provided by the portfolio. Some were pleased simply with the amount of work that they documented, noting the list of words on a vocabulary log or the number of learning samples in their portfolio. "*Overall, R.'s reactions are very positive. To me, all the sets of papers were confusing, but he loved it. He indicated that he had never done so much work while he was in school*" (TJ2). Students expressed a sense of accomplishment from reviewing concrete evidence of progress toward their goals. The teachers found that many students wanted to include all of their working portfolio materials in their summary portfolio, revealing their pride in documenting their achievements. One student said, "*[The portfolio] reflects my own interests like a mirror - the classes don't do this*"(D).

Limitations

The pilot study also revealed certain limitations of this portfolio assessment approach. These limitations are related to paperwork, time, the portfolio structure, purpose of the portfolio, student ownership, and collaborative assessment of outcomes. Some potential ways to address these limitations are also discussed.

Paperwork

Perhaps the most frequently mentioned problem with the portfolio process was the paperwork involved. As one student succinctly put it: "Too much questions, too much paper" (S). Students and teachers felt overwhelmed by the number of forms and found it difficult to remember the time sequence for completing them. Some of this difficulty was overcome as they gained more experience and familiarity with the materials. However, there is clearly a need for a more simplified and manageable system of paper management. At least one student felt that the paperwork seemed too repetitious. Some students' difficulty with spelling and with expressing their ideas in writing made the paperwork even more burdensome.

The obvious solution to this problem is to eliminate some of the portfolio materials. We found that all of the elements had value, and that students varied in their reactions to different elements. Accordingly, we have left the materials intact in our final assessment approach. One suggestion is for individual teachers to choose only a few elements that are most appropriate in their own teaching situations. Students might also be given the opportunity to select the elements that are most relevant to their own goals, and eliminate others, such as the vocabulary log or outside reading log. It might also be easier for students if they were asked to gradually take on the use of different materials, rather than start with the entire process in the first few weeks of instruction.

One teacher experimented with using binders to hold the portfolio documents. This reduced the confusion caused by loose papers and seemed to help the students who tried it. For some students with writing problems, the teachers wrote responses as the students dictated them. Eventually such students were able to handle the writing independently.

Time

As described earlier, the time involved in the portfolio process was considerable. In particular, the initial interviews and portfolio conferences required large blocks of student-teacher time. Completing the portfolio materials took considerable time for students, particularly when their writing skills were weak.

Several strategies might be used to make the interviews and conferences more manageable. Some questions might be deleted, according to the preference of the teacher. In particular, the conference might be shortened by focusing primarily on the collaborative assessment and dropping some of the more general conference questions. In the pilot study, the teachers frequently divided the interviews and conferences into shorter segments, which were easier to handle in the learning center context.

The time required for students to complete the portfolio materials may be seen as less of a problem if the portfolio is viewed as an instructional tool, not simply as a form of assessment. In addition, if teachers give students more guidance in reflection and self-assessment, students may have less difficulty and need less time to complete the materials. Finally, one teacher commented, "*I hope the time issue doesn't become the main focus...the need for assessment with students is a much more important issue. I feel that students will view their learning in a more positive light if they can see progress being made. This also holds true of my teaching*" (personal correspondence).

Portfolio Structure

Several structural aspects of the portfolio presented difficulties. The logistics of recording activities in class or at home were problematic for students. We planned to keep the portfolios in class, but students wanted to complete some forms at home, like the outside reading log. Students often were unsure of what material belonged in their portfolio and what should remain in their regular work folders. As noted previously, using a predetermined schedule for documentation and conferences did not work well with students' variable attendance patterns. It was often difficult for teachers to arrange times to meet with students for conferences.

The use of a binder, as noted above, may reduce some of the confusion between portfolio materials and material for the work folder. One option might be to eliminate a separate work folder, and keep all ongoing logs and work in the working portfolio. Completed work that would not be included as evidence of learning could be eliminated at each portfolio conference. Due to the great variation in student attendance in the learning center, it might be desirable for the documentation schedule to be determined on an individual basis for each student. For example, some students might choose a learning sample each week, while others would choose one every two or even three weeks, depending on their attendance. It might be feasible for teachers to ask students to choose samples or complete reflections as appropriate when they help students plan their daily or weekly activities in class.

Purposes of the Portfolio

Students' use of the portfolio process was affected by their understanding of the purpose for specific elements and the portfolio as a whole. The teachers observed that students often felt that the portfolio was not relevant to their goal of passing the GED tests: "*I've noticed that our participants just don't see the connection, and it's a connection they want to see, between the portfolio and getting a GED. They want to see change, yes, but as it more directly affects the attainment of a GED or HSED*" (TJ2). This perception was related to many students' beliefs that they did not need to improve their reading abilities to prepare for the test - in contradiction to their teachers' assessments.

While the teachers were convinced of the portfolio's value as an assessment tool, it might have been beneficial to clarify the instructional utility of particular elements. For example, when it became apparent that students had difficulty in reflecting on their learning, the reflection guides might have been used to teach self-assessment skills.

Finally, the completed summary portfolios did not seem appropriate for all of the purposes and audiences we had initially specified. The portfolios did seem to be effective in demonstrating learning outcomes to students and teachers. The teachers felt that the portfolios could be useful to them or other teachers who might work with the students in future basic skills classes. The portfolios also proved to be valuable as a means of reviewing curriculum and instruction. Students did not have the goal of sharing their portfolios with other audiences, such as employers, nor did the portfolios did not seem appropriate for such audiences. It is doubtful that employers would take the time to read the portfolio materials, or that they would be able to relate the information easily to job qualifications. The extent that these portfolios can be used for program evaluation is also questionable. We did not attempt to quantify and compile student outcome data, for example. The issue of using portfolios for program evaluation is discussed more extensively in the Recommendations section.

It may be helpful to develop a better means of introducing students to the potential purposes of the portfolio at the outset of instruction. Clarifying the audience for a final portfolio with the student during the initial interview (or in an orientation session before the interview) could help students see the purpose of the portfolio process, and also help students and teachers create portfolios that will be appropriate for other readers. Teachers may need training that clarifies the purpose of each element. They might benefit from opportunities to brainstorm ideas for using the elements as instructional tools.

Student ownership

While the students were expected to take considerable responsibility for maintaining the portfolio, the teachers found it necessary to remind and assist them with most elements. One teacher felt that students' participation varied according to the individual student, perhaps reflecting their abilities and inclination to be self-directed, as well as their like or dislike of different elements. The difficulty of writing and self-reflection for some students made them less likely to complete the forms without prodding. Some of their apparent lack of ownership might have really been uncertainty about how to use the materials. One teacher observed that students' ownership of the process seemed to improve after conferences, perhaps because they felt more organized and less confused about using the materials.

The previously described strategies for simplifying the portfolio process might increase students' ability to handle the portfolio tasks independently. A gradual approach to delegating student responsibility for the portfolio might also be helpful. One teacher speculated that students' previous schooling experiences made them expect to rely on teachers for constant guidance; accordingly, it might take time for students to feel comfortable with taking a greater role in portfolio activities. Finally, to ensure student commitment, it seems essential that the portfolio be meaningful to them, as discussed in the section above.

Collaborative Assessment of Outcomes

The collaborative assessment process was difficult for teachers and students. We devoted considerable meeting time to this process, which helped considerably. However, a review of the completed assessment forms still revealed great inconsistencies in how teachers completed the assessment forms with their students. It was difficult for them to identify and describe **specific** indicators of progress and current abilities. Teacher comments and the portfolio materials indicate that students had difficulty with goal-setting, reflection, and evaluating their learning. This difficulty is understandable; while they may have been evaluated by teachers or employers, it is likely that students have seldom been asked to evaluate themselves. Students also resisted selecting only a few criteria for assessment; they seemed to feel that omitting criteria reflected a failure to learn.

From a design perspective, we felt a conflict between providing predetermined assessment criteria versus asking students and teachers to generate criteria on an individual basis. Identifying assessment criteria can be a challenging task, as any teacher can testify! Accordingly, we decided to provide a list of potential evaluation criteria that students and teachers could use as a starting point for selecting their own. We generated these criteria in relation to the broad curricular goals - reading, writing, and learning-to-learn skills - that the portfolio was intended to address. The teachers appreciated the provision of these criteria. However, it became difficult in some cases to connect these criteria with the goals generated by each student for their learning plan. We discovered that our list didn't cover all potential criteria that might be used to assess progress towards student goals. Further, we found that each teacher interpreted the criteria differently.

The literature offers limited advice and conflicting perspectives on how to deal with these concerns. There is an obvious need for more teacher training in appropriate assessment and documentation strategies. In addition, students will need training in the process of self-assessment. This might be done in connection with the actual assessment of their portfolio materials at the conference, and during regular instruction. For example, teachers might give students more explicit feedback on strengths and weaknesses in their learning reflections.

Changes in the portfolio process and materials are needed to make the assessment criteria more directly relevant to student goals. One strategy might include discussion of assessment criteria as part of preparing the learning plan. After learning goals are defined, the student and teacher could specify criteria, perhaps using a list for examples, but developing their own as appropriate. Indicators and evidence of progress in relation to these criteria could then be identified at the portfolio conferences. A four part form, with sections for Learning Goals, Criteria for Assessment, Indicators of Progress, and Evidence could replace the current collaborative assessment form.

Other strategies might also be used to improve the assessment aspect of the portfolio. As a critical aspect of the portfolio, it will require further development and field-testing.

Other Issues affecting Portfolio Assessment

During the pilot study, we discovered that aspects of the learning center program created issues that made it difficult to use the working portfolio. Further, it became apparent that these issues were interfering with student progress in general. Some of these have been suggested in the preceding discussion of strengths and weaknesses. It may be necessary to make programmatic changes in these areas before any portfolio assessment approach can be used effectively and to ensure that student progress is sufficient to make portfolio assessment worthwhile.

Attendance policies and actual student attendance

Earlier in the report we described the irregular patterns of attendance and generally low number of hours that students attend the learning center. This is a concern on a national level. Our attendance figures are comparable to findings from a recently completed national study of adult basic education programs. That study found that ABE students (less than high school completion level) completed a median of 10 weeks and 31 hours of instruction. Only about 8% continue into a second year of instruction. Of all students (ESL, ABE, and ASE), about 25% leave and then return after absences of five weeks or more (Development Associates, 1994).

MATC's program, similar to many other adult basic skills programs, does not have any attendance requirements. While this flexibility accommodates students' varied schedules and responsibilities, it also may promote the belief that regular attendance is not important. Of course, many students have very legitimate reasons for missing classes. The teachers reported a variety of personal problems that were affecting student attendance, and also students' concentration while they were in class. These problems seemed to interfere in particular with their ability to complete portfolio materials, perhaps because more thought was required than for more rote workbook exercises (or perhaps the teachers just became more aware of the problem).

What kind of progress might students be expected to demonstrate in a portfolio when most attend only a few hours per week and for less than one full semester? While some students might supplement hours in class with study at home, many do not have time or an appropriate place to study. Research has suggested that an average of 100 instructional hours is required for one reading grade level improvement. Many students simply may not be able to accumulate enough evidence of learning to make compiling a portfolio worthwhile.

It is beyond the scope of this report to address strategies for dealing with attendance issues. However, it seems essential for basic skills programs and the state board staff to devote more attention to these concerns. Attendance policies might be necessary to make it clear that regular attendance is necessary for real progress. In addition, students might need better counseling before they enter basic skills programs. Some students told us that they had very unrealistic beliefs about the time and effort required to improve their skills. Former and current students might be recruited to talk with prospective learners about the realities of basic skills learning. This might enable students to make more informed decisions about whether they can make a commitment to education given their current life situation. For some, adding the burden of schoolwork to an already difficult life situation might merely add to their stress, rather than provide a solution.

Basic Skills Curriculum and Instruction

Fingeret (1993) states that "portfolio assessment is compatible with instruction that approaches literacy as a process of constructing meaning, in a learner-centered way" (p. 3). She goes on to say that portfolio assessment is not appropriate in programs that use a skills-based, expert-oriented approach to instruction. Instruction in MATC's learning center - similar to many other adult basic skills programs - primarily reflects a skills-based approach. While the program philosophy is learner-centered, instruction typically is guided by GED textbook content and teachers' judgements. This reflects the program orientation towards GED completion, and dominant assumptions about the most appropriate approach to GED test preparation.

The existing curriculum and instruction made it difficult to use portfolios in several ways. Portfolios are intended to be collections of "authentic" evidence of literacy abilities applied to realistic tasks in realistic contexts. However, much of students' classwork consisted of workbook exercises that represent the application of isolated skills. While we encouraged the use of realistic samples, we also felt obligated to allow students to include samples of workbook activities, since these represented much of their classwork. The value of these samples for teacher and learner, as well as for other audiences, is questionable. Do they provide helpful information about students' abilities? Would a simple tally of correct and incorrect answers be just as adequate? Such questions need to be addressed in future work with portfolio assessment in ABE. As discussed earlier in the report, we did decide that it was not worthwhile to use portfolio assessment for math without a major curriculum change. Portfolio assessment in math would be most appropriate when students are asked to clarify and solve complex problems involving a variety of mathematical skills (not simple equations), through small group work and communication with other learners.

The existing emphasis on GED test preparation contributed to some students' beliefs that portfolios would not be useful or relevant to their goals, and perhaps might detract from their progress towards earning the credential. The teachers noted that some students questioned the relevance of any activity that was not drawn from a GED workbook. This attitude is rather extreme, but it reflects unfortunately common assumptions held by students as well as some teachers. One assumption is that the primary goal of basic skills education is a passing score on the GED test, not to improve reading and writing abilities in a broader sense, or to apply those skills to other situations. If that is in fact the primary goal, portfolio assessment may well be extraneous since success would be most aptly measured only by GED test scores. A related assumption is that the skills needed to pass the GED test are best (perhaps only) developed through workbook exercises. In fact, the GED test was originally developed to assess skills acquired and reinforced through daily living, not in a formal educational setting. These skills also might be developed through broader educational methods, such as reading literature, nonfiction and other authentic reading material (rather than excerpts in workbooks), group discussions, projects, and so on. These methods might contribute to more meaningful learning experiences as well.

The GED emphasis may partly explain the lack of curriculum related to other important instructional goals. For example, though the teachers identified critical thinking and learning-to-learn skills as important goals, it became apparent that curriculum related to these goals was limited or not frequently used in instruction. While these kinds of skills may be very pertinent to GED test preparation, they have not been a primary focus in many commercial texts until quite recently. In addition, there are no GED tests called "Critical Thinking," for example, which reduces the apparent relevance of these skills.

Ironically, the focus on GED test preparation may also contribute to students' beliefs that they do not need to improve their reading skills. Students do not primarily enroll in the learning center because of difficulty in handling everyday reading demands. It apparently is difficult for students to relate a reading level score on a test like the TABE to their ability to achieve a passing score on the GED test. This difficulty is perhaps increased by the organization of the GED test according to content area. While teachers commonly are aware that good reading skills are much more important than content knowledge in passing the tests, students may not realize this. However, until reading in a broad sense, as well as more specific reading abilities, become more explicit goals for students, portfolios that focus on such abilities will be perceived as irrelevant for many learners.

These issues led us to conclude that portfolios would not be appropriate for students with higher level skills who enroll to "brush up" their skills before taking the GED tests. We might also ask whether portfolios should be used at all in adult basic skills programs with a skills-based curriculum such as we encountered. According to Fingeret (1993), portfolio assessment is inconsistent with the philosophy of such programs and thus is inappropriate. From this perspective, a major curriculum change from skills-based to a more constructivist, whole-language approach would be necessary before portfolio assessment might be used in the adult basic skills program.

Our experience in the pilot study, while it reinforced the problems posed by trying to use portfolio assessment in a skills-based curriculum, also suggested that portfolio assessment might be a way to prompt changes in curriculum. As described earlier, teachers began to use more real-life reading materials and identify a wider range of student goals as a result of using portfolios. It may be possible to adopt portfolios concurrently with more concerted efforts to make curriculum changes.

Learning Center Format

The learning center format interfered with the use of portfolios and also may have a negative impact on student progress. We discovered that generally there was limited time for teachers to work one-on-one with any student without numerous interruptions. In current instruction, the teachers serve primarily as instructional "managers," making sure that students are progressing through workbook-based exercises and providing brief assistance when they encounter problems. The portfolio requires more extended interactions, in the interviews and conferences. It potentially requires more direct instruction and teacher support as students handle more complex tasks such as reflection on their learning. It is notable that students in the pilot study mentioned greater teacher contact as a significant benefit of using the portfolios. On a broader scale, this would not be possible without changes in the lab format. One strategy might be to restrict the number of students scheduled to use the learning center at a given time, to a reasonable student-teacher ratio. Certain days every month or time during each week might be reserved for student-teacher conferences. Some instruction might be provided periodically to small groups of students within the lab. While these strategies might reduce the overall number of instructional hours or number of students served, they might also lead to better instruction and assessment, and improved learning outcomes.

Teacher Preparation Time

Another factor that affected the use of portfolios was limited teacher preparation time. To use portfolios effectively, teachers must have time to prepare for interviews and conferences, monitor student use of portfolio materials, and document progress. In addition, the portfolio approach often required teachers to prepare new learning activities as they identified a broader range of student goals and needs. It was necessary for us to include funds in our project to ensure that our teachers would have a minimal amount of paid preparation time. This time was barely adequate for them to handle paperwork and curriculum development for the small number of students in the pilot project. Using a portfolio approach is not feasible without a significant reallocation of teacher time to such supportive activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A goal of this project was to develop a portfolio assessment approach that might serve as a model for adult basic skills educators in the Wisconsin Technical College System and other programs. As we learned more about portfolio assessment, we changed our conception of this model. Our experience, and a common perspective in the literature, suggests that educators should develop portfolio assessment systems that are specific to their own instructional settings. Instead of offering a process and set of materials for adoption by other programs, we have described our approach to the **development** of portfolio assessment as a model for other educators. We believe that our portfolio materials should be used as general examples rather than duplicated in other settings.

In light of this perspective, we offer general recommendations for adult basic skills teachers and program administrators who would like to develop a portfolio assessment process for their programs. We also make recommendations to the Wisconsin Technical College System State Board for further exploration of portfolio assessment on a statewide level.

Recommendations - Program and District Level

The recommendations are grouped into three phases of portfolio development: planning, using, and improving portfolio assessment. However, as Fingeret (1993) states, developing a portfolio assessment approach is a cyclical rather than a linear process. As we found in the pilot study, using portfolios can lead to new perspectives on teaching and learning, that can inform further changes in your portfolio process. Each list of recommendations is followed by a brief commentary. These recommendations are intended to be broad, not to serve as a step-by-step guide to portfolio development. For such a guide, readers can use the description of our portfolio development process, or consult Arter and Spandel (1992) and Fingeret (1993).

Planning a Portfolio Assessment Approach

1. FIRST, consider if portfolio assessment is appropriate and feasible given your existing curriculum, student goals, and instructional format.

2. Develop a portfolio assessment process specific to your own situation.

3. Use a collaborative planning approach that involves the teachers who will use the portfolio process.

4. Define the purpose(s) and audience(s) for portfolio assessment PRIOR to developing the portfolio materials.

5. Be selective at first in what you plan to assess. Have realistic expectations about how the portfolio process will work and the final products of the process.

Comments. Fingeret (1993) separates reflection on program philosophy and its consistency with portfolio assessment into a separate preliminary phase. We might add to this the need to examine consistency between espoused program philosophy and actual practice. Adopting portfolio assessment may be a way to move practice closer to philosophy; however, other strategies, such as curriculum change, may need to occur simultaneously. Teacher involvement in planning is essential to ensure that the portfolio process reflects their instructional practices, and to promote their commitment. It also serves an important staff development function. Different purposes and audiences require different assessment information and different types of portfolios. Purpose and audience can guide what is assessed. It is not feasible to assume that you can capture every learning outcome in a student's portfolio. Portfolio assessment may be more useful and less of a burden to students and teachers if it is focused on a selective range of outcomes.

Using Portfolio Assessment

6. Implement the process gradually, allowing time for experimentation and improvement.

7. Develop ways to communicate the purpose and value of portfolio assessment to your students, to increase their commitment to the process.

8. Schedule additional time for student-teacher conferences as well as teacher record-keeping; this will enhance instruction, not detract from it.

9. Keep the process for collecting portfolio materials flexible, to accommodate individual differences in goals, learning activities, and schedules.

Comments. We were surprised by the value of a "pilot test mentality" in our project. We felt more freedom to try new methods because we knew that they could be modified or discarded if they didn't work. Since students are expected to participate in the portfolio assessment process, they must be informed about their role and believe that the process will be worthwhile. In general, it is important to view portfolio activities as a part of instruction, not just assessment. With support, students can increase their self-assessment abilities through the process, and enhance their motivation to learn. Student-teacher conferences and teacher record-keeping will yield information about student needs and progress that can be used to improve the quality of instruction, not simply to document learning. In the learning center format, flexibility may be a key criterion for a successful portfolio approach. Flexibility might include using portfolios as one assessment option, rather than requiring it of every student.

Improving Portfolio Assessment

10. Plan ongoing opportunities for staff development (or your own learning activities) to address new skills required for portfolio assessment (such as using criteria for assessment, helping students identify goals, recording student behavior).

11. Monitor and provide feedback to students as they learn to use the portfolio materials - they are learning new skills, too.

12. Distinguish between weaknesses in portfolio assessment and weaknesses in curricula and program structure that affect student learning: you may need to tackle programmatic problems before portfolio assessment will be successful.

Comments. For portfolio assessment to be successful, teachers not only need to understand the elements of a portfolio, they also need to develop new skills in assessment and instruction. Such skills cannot be developed in a single training session. A better strategy is to provide training as teachers experiment with the portfolios. This approach enables teachers to relate training immediately to their practice, and to identify problems from their own experience. Group meetings are particularly valuable for emotional support as well as sharing new insights. Students also need ongoing support and feedback as they use portfolios. Strategies for teaching assessment skills might be incorporated into the development of the portfolio approach. Finally, problems like irregular student attendance or gaps in the curriculum may surface as you experiment with portfolios. Be open and willing to use portfolio assessment as an impetus for other program improvements.

Recommendations - Statewide Level

In this section a series of recommendations is suggested for the Wisconsin Technical College System state board. These strategies might form the basis for a comprehensive effort to incorporate portfolio assessment into adult basic skills programs in the technical college system.

1. Support further pilot testing of the portfolio process and materials developed in this project.

While we do not recommend that other districts simply adopt this portfolio approach in its entirety, the materials and process might be adapted or used selectively in other programs and districts. The Final Evaluation section of this report includes a number of suggestions for improving the portfolio approach. These improvements need to be incorporated into the portfolio and tested with other basic skills students in the learning center at MATC or in other districts. It is doubtful that teachers at MATC or in other programs will be able to use the materials without such modifications. We also need more information about the outcomes that might be demonstrated in the portfolio with students over longer periods of time. Such information might give us a better idea of the ultimate value of this type of portfolio as an assessment tool. In addition, the process that was used in this project to **develop** a portfolio assessment approach might be tested in different programs and districts. It is likely that the State Board will need to provide guidance and financial support to ensure that such experimentation continues. This might include funding additional demonstration projects, as well as ensuring that project results are compiled and disseminated.

2. Support the development and pilot testing of portfolio assessment in different adult basic skills contexts.

The learning center represents only one of many different adult basic skills instructional settings. Other major types of settings include small group or class instruction, workplace education, family literacy, basic skills in correctional institutions. Learners in these settings have different needs and goals, and different types of portfolios might be needed to assess their progress. Certain program characteristics might eliminate some difficulties we encountered in this project. For example, students might find portfolio assessment to be more relevant in workplace educational programs that focus on improvement of job-related skills rather than GED preparation. Student portfolios in such programs might be geared towards demonstrating outcomes to employers rather than teachers or students. The State Board might fund other demonstration projects in such contexts, linking them to the type of project described above. In addition, the Board staff might incorporate support for portfolio assessment activities in proposals for other funded programs, such as in future proposals for federal workplace literacy funds.

3. Explore the use of portfolios specifically designed to facilitate students' transition from adult basic skills education to employment, vocational training, and postsecondary education.

The portfolios developed and tested in this project represent only two of many possible types of portfolios. Other types of portfolios can and should be developed to help students accomplish different goals. Since many students have the goals of employment or further education, the development of transition portfolios is particularly relevant. Such portfolios could demonstrate students' abilities in relation to requirements for specific jobs, training programs, or or postsecondary education. This type of portfolio might be developed in collaboration with employers and educators from other programs, who could use the portfolio as part of their application process.

4. Design and implement staff development activities to enable teachers and program administrators to develop and use portfolio assessment strategies at the program and district levels.

Ideally, each district should plan portfolio assessment strategies that are suited to its context and program philosophy. Teachers as well as administrators should be involved in planning portfolio assessment strategies for their districts. One way to support such planning might be a "train-the-trainer" approach. Selected teachers, or program administrators, from different programs could be trained to serve as facilitators of the planning process for their districts. Another strategy might be to support selected teachers from each district in planning a portfolio strategy that they could test in their own classes, using the Summer Institute as a model. It would also be essential to provide the teachers with ongoing assistance as they pilot-tested their portfolio approach for one or two semesters during the academic year. These teachers could then serve as models and mentors for other teachers in their districts who wished to use portfolios. These activities would require financial support beyond districts' current levels of staff development funds.

5. Support the development of instructional strategies to enhance student reflection and self-assessment skills.

A central aspect of portfolio assessment is student reflection and self-assessment. Students have shown difficulty with these tasks; they will not develop these skills simply through using the portfolio. Teachers need instructional strategies to help students enhance such abilities. The State Board might solict proposals for projects that would involve developing appropriate strategies for teaching student reflection and self-assessment skills and testing these strategies with basic skills students, in conjunction with their use of portfolio assessment.

6. Link portfolio assessment with curriculum change and development activities.

Portfolio assessment is philosophically compatible with a learner-centered, holistic approach to literacy education. While this might be the espoused philosophy of many adult basic skills educators, actual practice is most often expert-driven and skills-oriented. Some of the problems associated with this orientation were described in the section, Other Issues Affecting Portfolio Assessment. The recent report of the Wisconsin Basic Skills Task Force (1994) calls for a major curriculum revision. If this revision is towards a more holistic, learner-centered approach, then concurrent efforts to design portfolio assessment may be quite appropriate and supportive of these changes. If such curriculum changes are not made, efforts to introduce portfolio assessment into adult basic skills programs may not be worthwhile.

7. Investigate and devise strategies to address students' attendance problems.

While students' irregular attendance patterns and high dropout rate are not new problems, they became critical issues as we tried to use portfolio assessment. Many students may not attend long enough to make portfolio assessment worthwhile - or to make any significant learning gains. The State Board should take leadership in gathering more information about student attendance patterns and their relationship to learning outcomes. Strategies to improve attendance should be developed and tested in various districts. One caveat: obviously, simply increasing the time a student spends in class does not ensure that he or she will learn. Strategies for improving attendance will need to be combined with efforts to ensure that the instruction provided is effective.

8. Explore alternative ways of using portfolio assessment for program evaluation.

In the literature, we found some examples of portfolio assessment data used in aggregate form as evidence of program effectiveness. However, there are many conceptual and practical issues related to aggregation of portfolio data that are not easily resolved. An overview of such issues is provided by Meyer, Schuman, and Angelo (1990). For example, students' diverse accomplishments can pose a problem for compiling overall program statistics. Further, from one perspective, standardization and aggregation of student outcome data are philosophically incompatible with the nature of portfolio assessment. In our project, it seemed inappropriate to impose a standard set of activities and criteria for evaluating learning outcomes, since students' goals and abilities were so diverse. In addition, we concluded that portfolio assessment may not be appropriate for all students. Accordingly, portfolio assessment **by itself** may not be a practical way to obtain information about program outcomes. However, the state board staff might investigate ways to incorporate data from portfolio assessment along with other data in the existing client reporting system.

The results of our pilot study demonstrate another way that portfolio assessment might be used for program evaluation. The portfolios provide evidence of positive program attributes, such as teachers' adaptability to the needs and interests of individual students. Using portfolios also revealed problems, such as the extent of poor attendance in the learning center. Curriculum gaps and resource needs became apparent as teachers attempted to address instructional goals specified in the portfolio materials. Staff development needs were identified as the teachers encountered difficulties with various elements of the portfolio. Thus, the students' portfolios became a source of information about specific strengths and weaknesses of the basic skills program.

A more deliberate portfolio-based program evaluation system has been piloted with public schools in Vermont (Tierney et al. 1991). In this system, a random set of student portfolios are evaluated according to criteria reflecting desirable program characteristics. Such criteria might include evidence of varied instructional methods, appropriate curriculum, and adequate student progress. This approach to program evaluation appears to be feasible without sacrificing diversity in the nature of individual portfolios. It is a promising alternative for further investigation in adult basic skills education.

Another way to collect program level data is through the construction of **composite portfolios**. As described by Arter and Spandel (1992), a composite portfolio is comparable to an individual student portfolio, except it reflects the work of a group of students. A teacher might create a composite portfolio to represent the work of students in a particular class or program during the year. The composite portfolio might include samples from individual student portfolios that represent key learning outcomes, instructional strategies, or curricula. Students can be involved in the construction of these portfolios as well. Composite portfolios could be created by program staff and used as evidence in the current basic skills program evaluation process in Wisconsin. This approach might easily be tested in a few districts.

9. Develop a comprehensive plan to guide the development and adoption of portfolio assessment on a statewide level.

This list of recommendations is long, and could be longer. Our pilot project, while yielding many insights into portfolio assessment, made it clear that much more work will be necessary. A long-range state plan for portfolio assessment could incorporate the above strategies and be linked with other program initiatives. Such a plan might help to ensure that progress continues, that necessary funds are set aside, that results are shared and a body of knowledge and resources are developed. An initial plan may not be difficult to prepare. A working group of teachers, directors, assessment experts (such as those we consulted in the development of our portfolio approach), and State Board staff could be appointed to create the plan.

On a national level, adult basic education has suffered from a long history of one-shot development projects that have little impact. In the educational field more broadly, we are often subject to sweeping fads in educational methods that fade as quickly as they appear. Portfolio assessment - by itself - may become simply a passing fad. Alternatively, with planning and commitment, it may become part of a more permanent and profound improvement in adult basic skills education.

REFERENCES

(This is a list of publications cited in this report. For an extensive list of other publications on portfolio assessment, see Hayes, E. and Kretschmann, K. (1993). Portfolio Assessment: A Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Technical College System).

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APPENDIX

1. Self-test for portfolio development (Arter & Spandel)
2. Types of portfolios
3. Strategy worksheet
4. Task force members
5. Task Force Meeting Agendas and Minutes
6. What is portfolio? (student flyer)
7. Individual student data
8. Site Visits
9. Modifications of portfolio materials

TYPES OF PORTFOLIOS

1. **Working Portfolios** - The purpose of these portfolios is to document the learning process as well as learning outcomes. These portfolios typically include most or all of students' work in a particular content area. They often include preliminary drafts as well as final versions of learning activities.

2. **Best Evidence/Best Pieces Portfolios** - The purpose of this type of portfolio is primarily to provide evidence of students' best performance in relation to a variety of tasks or to document final learning outcomes. Included in such portfolios are examples of student work selected to represent their most significant accomplishments or highest quality of performance. These examples are typically selected collaboratively by student and teacher. They might be used for employment or admission into other educational programs.

3. **Keepsake Portfolios** - These portfolios are intended to celebrate what the student has accomplished. The content includes pieces that are personally meaningful to the learner.

4. **Transition Portfolios** - These portfolios are used to communicate with students' subsequent teachers. They provide evidence of students' current level of achievement and experience with various learning activities. They may also provide a more personal perspective on students' learning preferences, personalities, goals, etc.

5. **Standardized Portfolios** - These portfolios document student learning according to a common set of activities and criteria. These portfolios are typically used for large scale assessment or for program evaluation. They may also be used to document individual achievement for alternative credit for coursework or credentials.

6. **Group or Composite Portfolios** - These portfolios contain more than one student's work. Their purpose is to provide evidence of group performance, to document the process and impact of a course or program, etc. These portfolios may be compiled in a collaborative manner by the group, or by the course teacher(s).

Current Strategies to Accomplish Instructional Goals

Example

Goal: improved use of literacy skills in real-life situations
specific example: skills related to getting a job

Current assessment strategies
how: verbal interview; completion of initial goals inventory; student record of progress; teacher record of progress
what: inventory and progress sheets
when: beginning of instruction; periodically throughout instruction (but not systematically)
who: all students

Current instructional strategies
how: individualized practice; student-teacher interaction as needed
what: commercial skills books; real-life materials (job applications, employment ads, etc.)
when: according to student interest and need
who: all students who identify such goals

Goal:

Current assessment strategies
how:

what:

when:

who:

Current instructional strategies
how:

what:

when:

who:

Goal:

Current assessment strategies
how:

what:

when:

who:

Current instructional strategies
how:

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Goal:

Current assessment strategies
how:

what:

when:

who:

Current instructional strategies
how:

what:

when:

who:

PORTFOLIO TASK FORCE MEMBERS

MEMBERS:
Sharon Hart, MATC, Dean Technical and Industrial Department
Lou Chinneswamy, WVTAE Consultant, Special Demonstration Projects
Mary Ann Jackson, WVTAE Consultant
John Fortier, DPI, Assessment
Susan McMahon, UW, Portfolio Research
Mary Gomez, UW, Portfolio Research
Judy Campbell, Omega, ABE Instructor
Sharon Fallon, MATC, Workplace Literacy
Bob Esser, MATC, ESL Instructor
Ann Henderson, Gateway Technical, ABE
Elizabeth Staebler, Gateway Technical, ABE
Ken Roh, MATC, T&I Instructor
Barbara Waters, Placon, Workplace Literacy Site
Evonne Brukardt Carter, MATC Milwaukee, ABE
Phil Olsen, MATC ESL Instructor

ABE TEACHERS INVOLVED:
Sharon Thieding, MATC Stoughton Outreach Site
Barbara Jantz, MATC Portage
Mary K. Moser, MATC Downtown

ADMINISTRATIVE:
Eduardo Arangua, MATC, Dean ALD
Betty Hayes, UW CAVE
Karen Johnson Kretschmann, MATC ALD

AGENDA
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING DIVISION

TO: Portfolio Assessment Task Force

FROM: Eduardo Arangua, Administrative Dean

DATE: April 7, 1993

MEETING DATE: April 19, 1993 LOCATION: MATC Downtown Rm. D125

TIME: 4:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Discussion of Portfolio Task Force Charge

AGENDA

	TOPIC	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TIME (MINS)
1.	Introductions	Eduardo	10
2.	Membership	Eduardo	10
3.	Overview of the Alternative Learning Division	Eduardo	10
4.	Review of the Proposal	Betty/Karen	20
5.	Review of the role of the task force members	Karen/Betty	20
6.	Other	All	20

Overall Meeting Objectives:
To introduce the task force, discuss the charge, review the proposal and the task force role.

Results Desired This Meeting:
Orient the task force to the Portfolio Proposal.

Pre-Meeting Preparation:
Review the proposal.

EA/mm
memo4
portagda

Portfolio Assessment Task Force Meeting Notes
April 19, 1993
MATC Downtown, Room D125

The meeting opened with members introducing themselves and stating their interest in portfolio assessment (see member list).

Eduardo Arangua discussed how essential it is to have a task force composed of a diverse group of professionals with expertise in many diverse areas, ranging from direct practice with adult students to program administrators to employers. This will allow us to better develop a model which will meet the expectations of a wide variety of stakeholders.

Eduardo gave a brief overview of the Alternative Learning Division (ALD) of Madison Area Technical College (MATC) (see organizational chart). He stressed the role ourp1278Xdepartment plays in assisting adult students to transition into higher education, employment or meet other individual goals.

Betty Hayes reviewed the project proposal and activities. The proposal resulted from a federal program request that each state develop their own performance indicators, standards and measures for ABE programs. One key performance indicator is student outcomes. These have typically been assessed by standard test score data, which have many weaknesses due to both problems in the tests and appropriateness to the ABE situation. The ABE setting emphasizes individualized student goals & instruction, which cannot be measured on a standard grade level test. Betty explained that she had been invited to discuss standardized tests and alternative ways of assessing learner outcomes at the Fall VTAE ABE District Coordinators meeting. Portfolio assessment seemed to be the most promising alternative, however it has not been used in a standard manner in ABE. At that time Eduardo and Betty discussed collaboration on this project. It seemed most sensible to "pilot project" in one district as a test of feasibility and model for other interested programs throughout the state.

The project was conceived in two stages:
Stage 1. Development of the model (we now prefer plan) for portfolio assessment during this spring and summer. A number of activities will be part of the planning:

- annotated bibliography of available literature.
- interviews with experts and practitioners
- development of a concept paper
- development of the plan
- development of teacher training strategies

Stage 2. Pilot/use of the model (plan) in ABE classes at MATC to begin Fall 1993 and continue Spring 1994. The pilot will be done with three instructors; a full-time downtown teacher, a part-time satellite campus teacher and a part-time outreach site teacher. Data will be collected on feasibility, utility, impact on students and teachers. Recommendations and dissemination of further development strategies will be based on the results of the pilot.

Karen explained that we will ask the portfolio assessment task force to react and give advice related to the products in June 1993. The task force will also be asked to react to the design for data collection in September and recommended plan changes in January. We will also ask for final advice in the spring. The tentative meeting timeline for the task force will be:

(a) June 1993
(b) September 1993
(c) December 1993/January 1994.

We also discussed the scope of the portfolio assessment plan. The proposal states we will develop an assessment model which will be used with adults at reading grade levels 5.9 - 8.9 and include reading, writing and math development. We may initially begin with reading and add writing and math at a later date.

MATC Madison Area Technical College

Beverly S. Simone
President

DATE: May 19, 1993

TO: Portfolio Assessment Task Force Members

FROM: Betty Hayes & Karen Johnson Kretschmann

RE: Initial Meeting Follow-up

Please excuse the tardiness of this note. We wanted to follow-up with you after the initial meeting which was held April 19, 1993. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the portfolio task force charge. We appreciated seeing those of you who were able to attend. We hope that this memo and the attached materials are helpful to those of you who were understandably unable to make the meeting.

Attached you will find a list of all of the portfolio assessment task force members and their affiliations. We are also including a brief summary of the meeting, as well as materials which were handed out at the initial meeting.

We look forward to meeting with you all this summer for a review of the portfolio model. We will be in contact with you to inform you of the exact date and time of the meeting in June/July. Thank you for your time.

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MATC Madison Area Technical College

Beverly S. Simone
President

DATE: August 16, 1993

TO: Portfolio Assessment Task Force Members

FROM: Betty Hayes & Karen Johnson Kretschmann

RE: Involvement in the Development of the Portfolio Phase

Since our last memo to you, we have been very busy. We had originally set-up possible times to meet with you in June, September and December/January. Well, the summer "vacation" got going and we just kept working to meet our many goals. We have completed an annotated bibliography of 37 documents relevant to development of a portfolio assessment method in adult education. As well, we have included a full bibliography of the 75 documents we reviewed. We continued to have meetings with the three instructors who are piloting the project this Fall. They gave us valuable insight and feedback for the project. Our main task was to develop the portfolio plan which will be used in the three MATC sites this Fall. We drafted, revised, met, redrafted and continue to revise.

Let me just briefly remind you about the project. We are developing a reading (writing and math later) portfolio assessment plan to be used with adults having grade point equivalents of 6.0 - 8.9. The pilot will be conducted in the MATC learning center sites; Downtown campus, Portage campus, and Stoughton outreach. We hope to work with 20 students each semester. It was decided that we would develop a plan for a working portfolio (see attached for six types of portfolios). We also plan to develop a summary (transition) portfolio at the end of the semester. Goals to focus on are basic academic skills, problem solving skills and learning to learn skills.

We have decided not to meet in September, but rather solicit your feedback by mail. We are including a copy of the annotated bibliography for your review and comments. We are also including the reading portfolio forms and instructions for you comments. We ask that you look over the materials and either send us comments or call by September 10, 1993. If we have not heard from you by then, we will assume all looks good. We do plan to meet in January 1994 and possibly late Fall to inform you of the first semester pilot results. However, if you would like to know more or would like to be further involved please call us (Karen 231-3788, Betty 263-0774). Thank you for your time.

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MATC
Madison Area
Technical College

Beverly S. Simone
President

DATE: October 25, 1993

TO: Portfolio Assessment Task Force Members

FROM: Betty Hayes and Karen Johnson Kretschmann

RE: Fall Semester Meeting

We are pleased to report that we are well into our pilot test of the initial portfolio process and materials. To date, we have 16 students involved in the project. Both students and teachers are very enthusiastic about the portfolio process in general. We are learning quite a bit from their feedback about what works and doesn't work that we can incorporate into a revised version of the process to be used second semester.

We would like to schedule a meeting with you this Fall. The main purpose of the meeting will be to give you more specific information about the current results of the pilot and to seek your feedback on the modifications we intend to make in the process. We also would like to discuss the summary (transition) portfolio materials that we will pilot with the teachers and students starting in December. We are attaching DRAFT summary portfolio forms for your review. Please plan to look at them prior to the meeting and bring your comments. A final agenda item will be to review our plans for expanding the portfolio materials to include other subject areas in the spring semester. We will also have available copies of the final annotated bibliography we completed this summer.

The meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 30th, from 4:00 - 5:30 pm. We will hold the meeting in room D125 at MATC's Downtown campus (211 N. Carroll St.). Please contact Karen at 231-3788 if you cannot attend the meeting.

Thanks for your time and your support of this project. We look forward to seeing you on the 30th!

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MATC PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Advisory Board/Task Force Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 30, 1993
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Room D125

Topic: Follow-up and Feedback on Portfolio Project

1. Project Update
   - what we have and done and student/instructor responses
   - discussion of benefits and problems
2. Summary Portfolio
   - review
   - feedback
3. Plans for Spring Semester
   - adding writing component
   - math discussion
4. Other

handouts: annotated bibliography
summary portfolio

MATC PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT PROJECT
Advisory Board/Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, November 30, 1993
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm, Room D125

Topic: Follow-up and Feedback on Portfolio Project

Project Update

This is a two part project. During the first six months, from January 1993 through June 1993, activities were done to prepare us to pilot a portfolio assessment method in the ABE learning center. Seventy-five (75) publications on portfolio assessment and alternative assessment were reviewed. A selective annotated bibliography was written including 35 of these 75 publications. These publications focused specifically on portfolio assessment and included ideas that could be most easily applied and adapted by ABE practitioners. Bibliographies by other groups were found to be useful resources. MATC has subscribed to seven newsletters on alternative assessment and portfolio assessment. National and local experts and practitioners were interviewed for further information. During this time we also developed the initial plan for portfolio assessment to be used in our learning centers. This was done through extensive collaboration with the three MATC instructors who are piloting the project this Fall. From the collaboration, a two tier portfolio assessment plan transpired which includes a semester long working portfolio for reading and an end of semester summary reading portfolio.

During the second part of the project we are **piloting** portfolio assessment in three learning centers in the District 4 area. These include the main Downtown campus, a satellite campus and an outreach site. This part of the project will last from July 1993 through June 1994. The pilot is being used with learners who score level two reading (6.0 - 8.9 grade level) on the TABE. A teacher in-service day was held in August 1993 and final materials to implement the working portfolio assessment for reading were introduced into the learning centers on September 13, 1993.
At this time we have eight students working with the reading portfolio at the Downtown campus, four students at the Portage satellite campus and three students at our Stoughton outreach site. Approximately 20 total learners were planned to work in the project **each** semester. Students feedback on the project is very positive. The instructors are implementing the project on regular class time however have 20 minutes a week per student curriculum time to organize, complete teacher logs and track time involved. Summary portfolio materials will be used by the instructors in the spring.

Strengths of the program are several. They have been the usability of the materials (instructors and learners have reported are very user friendly). The portfolio allows for an assessment of learning outcomes that would otherwise not be captured by a standardized test. The project has had an impact on instruction. The portfolio encourages use of real-life materials, increased instructor understanding of student needs and goals on an ongoing basis, as well as the assessment activities contribute directly to instruction. Finally, the project has increased the learner awareness of progress.

Issues and problems related with the project have also been found. Issues related to program format include, student attendance. This causes problems in finding students at the right grade level to participate, collecting sufficient evidence of usability and regular information on progress. We may need to consider an alternative schedule for collecting samples, reflections that is more flexible. A suggestion was made to include learner hours of commitment to the portfolio forms to reenforce commitment to the program. We will plan to add this to the learning plan. Another problem includes the amount of time it takes to complete the initial interview and conferences with the instructor and learner. The lab setting is especially difficult (interruptions, many students need attention). Omega uses portfolios and they set aside 30 minutes per learner a month where the learners know the instructor is not to be interrupted. As well, instructor prep time issues have revolved around appropriate use of time. Another major area of problems is in the curriculum area. Much of the curriculum is not appropriate to use in a portfolio (GED workbook emphasis). Gaps in the curriculum have been found in areas of critical thinking, problem solving and study skills. Identification of learner goals and inclusion of these goals in curriculum materials can often be very challenging. A major area of need has also been found in staff development. Instructor skills in evaluation need to be strengthened and general support in use of materials has been necessary. Finally, it has been found that the use of portfolios for program evaluation will be very difficult. Portfolios seem most appropriate as an option in learning labs, modules, etc. however not the only assessment method.

We discussed belief that the portfolio contributes to learning. This may be true however, the purpose of the portfolio is to be a new form of assessment (a place to **document** what is actually happening in the classroom), not an instructional tool.

Plans for Spring Semester
Initially we had hoped to include math in the portfolio, however further research has shown us that this would be extremely difficult due to the current curriculum issues (see above). Most models that include math are used with "whole math" approaches.. It has been suggested that a major curriculum change would be needed to use portfolios appropriately. Extensive instructor training would need to be part of this change. We have decided to NOT include math at this time and rather focus on writing along with the reading. Bob Esser mentioned the Downtown campus may be piloting an appropriate approach however we felt it was important not to muddy the waters for BOTH projects.

We will be expanding the portfolio, for the spring semester, to include writing. We have met with the instructors and obtained information on current writing instruction. They reported GED focus, do not teach the writing process as much, concerned about "overwhelming" the learner, minimal attempt to integrate reading and writing. Uncertainty exists about ho mechanics/workbooks are integrated with essay writing. We have begun developing the materials and altering existing forms to **include** writing into the existing format. We plan to develop an initial writing assessment and skill inventory to assist in measuring progress.

We do hope to continue with the project in an expanded form next year. The focus will be refining learner self-assessment and instructor evaluation. We hope to implement in workplace, intergenerational and module settings.

Summary Portfolio

Please see attached Summary (Transition) Portfolio sheet for the elements of the summary portfolio. This portfolio will be developed using the materials in the working portfolio and work folder. It will be completed at the end of the year or when a learner leaves the project. This portfolio is the learners to keep to show to other people such as employers, educational settings, other class instructors or family and friends. A copy of this summary portfolio will become part of the learners permanent file.

handouts: annotated bibliography
summary portfolio

MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
ONE YEAR PORTFOLIO PILOT PROJECT

Betty Hayes, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of Continuing & Vocational Education, 608-263-0774
Karen Johnson Kretschmann, Madison Area Technical College
Alternative Learning Division, 608-258-2440

What Is A Portfolio?

A portfolio is a way to display your progress, strengths and learning experiences. It provides a chance to build a picture that shows what you, a student, actually do in any learning situation. The actual portfolio is a folder of work, kept over a period of time, where you place a variety of reading activities and thoughts on your learning. By reviewing the work in the portfolio, you should be able to see how you are progressing in your learning.

Why Keep A Portfolio?

The portfolio will give you many chances to look over the work, to see how much work has been done over the weeks and months, and to see how much progress has been made. The portfolio will present a history of you, the student, and will be useful to teachers, employers, family and others when they need to see evidence of your progress. The benefits will be seen by you and the teachers, as well as those you choose to share the portfolio with outside the classroom.

What Goes Into A Portfolio?

The portfolio will contain activities related to your reading. Weekly, you will choose a sample reading activity that you think is most representative of the learning you have done that week. You will be reflecting on the activity, as well as your overall learning. You will also be keeping logs regularly to show what you are reading outside of class, any new words you learned and activities you have done in class. Two or three times a semester, you, the student and the teacher will look through the portfolio and add or remove samples, set any new goals and discuss the overall progress shown in the materials in the portfolio.

How Do I Produce Work For My Portfolio?

The teachers will help you, as well as you can make sure to include reading in your everyday life. Don't just rely on your teachers for assignments. Whenever you do any reading, either at home, work or in class, you are producing a possible portfolio sample and you should think about adding it to your portfolio. Your portfolio can become an opportunity for you to let your teachers, employers, family and others know about the kinds of learning you do outside the classroom.

STUDENT INFORMATION
MATC Portfolio Assessment Project

MATC Site: Madison - Downtown **Teacher:** Mary K. Moser **Total Number of Students:** Ten (10)

Name	Age	Sex	Race	Reading Level	ABE/ESL	Prior Program Enrollment	Attendance		# Weeks Enrolled	Additional Comments
							1st Sem.	2nd Sem.		
Eddy Arnold	29	M	Asian	08	ABE	No	32.10		6	Did not finish a full semester. Left instruction for job. Certificate sent 5/16/94.
Reynolds Baillies	70	M	White	09	ABE	Yes		138.60	16	Recruited/finished 2nd semester. Certificate/dictionary sent 5/16. Summary portfolio completed.
Robert Carlson	24	M	White	12	ABE	No		51.00	11	Recruited 2nd semester. Left instruction w/out notice. Certificate sent 5/16.
Bernice Cooper	39	F	Black	09	ABE	Yes	52.80		15	Recruited/Finished first semester. Left project to enroll in 5.09. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/16 Summary portfolio completed.
Mitchell Fry	34	M	White	07	ABE	No	230.04 *	11.10	22	* Hours over reported. Recruited/finished first semester. Left instruction for work/family. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/16

MATC Portfolio Assessment Project - Madison/Downtown (Cont'd)

Name	Age	Sex	Race	Reading Level	ABE/ ESL	Prior Program Enrollment	Attendance		# Weeks Enrolled	Additional Comments
							1st Sem.	2nd Sem.		
Felice Griffin	22	F	Black	08	ABE	No	45.60	1.20	15	Did not finish a full semester. Project participation minimal. Certificate sent 5/16/94.
Liliana Herrera	26	F	Hispanic	03	ESL	No	102.90	67.80	27	Finished both semesters. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/16 Summary portfolio completed.
Maria Johnson	30	F	White	06	ESL	Yes	38.70	2.40	14	Finished first semester. Left instruction for job. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/16
Geraldine Steele	36	F	Black	07	ABE	Yes	55.20	50.10	25	Finished first semester. Minimal participation 2nd sem. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/16
See Thao	35	F	Asian	07	ESL	Yes	55.20		15	Did not finish a full semester. Minimal participation in project. Certificate sent 5/16/94.

STUDENT INFORMATION
MATC Portfolio Assessment Project

MATC Site: Stoughton **Teacher:** Sharon Thieding **Total Number of Students:** Four (4)

Name	Age	Sex	Race	Reading Level	ABE/ ESL	Prior Program Enrollment	Attendance		# Weeks Enrolled	Additional Comments
							1st Sem.	2nd Sem.		
Merlin Beckwith	44	M	White	09	ABE	No		47.50	10	Recruited/finished 2nd semester. Certificate & dictionary given 5/13 to teacher for delivery. Summary portfolio completed.
Kathy Hauge	33	F	White	10	ABE	Yes	22.50		13	Finished first semester. Had work scheduling issues. Requested to leave project. Certificate & dictionary given 5/13 to teacher for delivery.
Dorota Jaroszczyk	54	F	White	05	ESL	Yes	24.00	21.00	28	Finished 1st & 2nd semesters. Certificate & dictionary given 5/13 to teacher for delivery. Summary portfolio completed.
Mary Ree	36	F	White	09	ABE	Yes	6.50		3	Dropped out of portfolio project. No certificate or dictionary sent.

STUDENT INFORMATION
MATC Portfolio Assessment Project

MATC Site: Portage **Teacher:** Barbara Jantz **Total Number of Students:** Six (6)

Name	Age	Sex	Race	Reading Level	ABE/ ESL	Prior Program Enrollment	Attendance		# Weeks Enrolled	Additional Comments
							1st Sem.	2nd Sem.		
Shane Chvojicek	19	M	White	08	ABE	No	14.75		11	Requested to leave project. Did not see connection w/ GED. Certificate sent 5/16/94.
Dorothy Crowley	27	F	White	08	ABE	No	20.00		8	Left project for personal issues. Certificate sent 5/16/94.
Barb Gray	38	F	White	09	ABE	Yes (In system for 17 years.)	178.50		15	Recruited/finished 1st semester. Left project to enroll in 5.09. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/1
Tege J. Meland	20	M	White	07	ABE	No		90.75	18	Recruited/finished 2nd semester Certificate & dictionary sent 5/1 Summary Portfolio completed.
Russ Morgan	20	M	White	06	ABE	No	50.75		12	Recruited/finished 1st semster. Left instruction, moved. Certificate & dictionary sent 5/1
Angela Schlough	33	F	White	06	ABE	No	10.50		6	Recruited 1st semester. Left project for personal issues. Certificate sent 5/16/94.

PORTFOLIO SITE VISITS

9/14/93	DTEC	Betty Hayes	: Assist with assessment/initial interview with three students.
9/17/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Follow-up with enrolled/assessed students, met four students.
9/30/93	Portage	Betty Hayes	: Follow-up of enrolled/assessed students, met one student.
10/4/93	Stoughton	Karen Kretschmann	: Follow-up with enrolled/assessed students, met two students.
10/8/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference with one student.
10/12/93	DTEC	Betty Hayes	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for three students (one no show).
10/14/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student.
10/21/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student.
10/21/93	Portage	Betty Hayes	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student.
10/20/93	Stoughton	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference, CANCEL.
11/1/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student.
11/9/93	Stoughton	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student, met another student.
11/22/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student.

11/29/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student, not finish.
12/1/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Finish Portfolio Conference with 11/29 student.
12/6/93	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for two students and planned vacation learning activities.
12/7/93	Portage	Betty Hayes	: Assist with Portfolio Conference but both students no show.
12/15/93	Stoughton	Karen Kretschmann	: Assist with Portfolio Conference for one student and Summary Portfolio completion for one student.
1/30/94	DTEC	Karen Kretschmann	: Visit teacher to discuss second semester implementation.
2/16/94	DTEC	Betty Hayes	: Meeting with three students to discuss project participation.
4/11/94	DTEC	Mary Ann Berry	: Visit site to review records.
4/12/94	Portage	Mary Ann Berry	: Visit site to review records.
4/13/94	DTEC	Mary Ann Berry	: Assist with student documentation for one student.
4/13/94	Stoughton	Mary Ann Berry	: Visit site to review records.
4/27/94	DTEC	Mary Ann Berry	: Complete student interview with two students.

CHANGES IN PORTFOLIO MATERIALS: FALL 1993 TO SPRING 1994

Daily Learning Log
DAILY removed from the title
: Most students do not attend daily, so seemed like a misnomer. Remove LEARNING GOALS DONE TODAY column
: Learning Goals and Learning Activities the same in the students mind. Students do not connect the Learning Plan goals and regular assignments/learning activities.
Add asterisk in every fourth row down to remind students to complete a Reflection Guide.
: Staff felt students needed a way to remind them to do the reflection guide, and since reflection is now every fourth class attended, added asterisk to Learning Log every fourth row.

Weekly Reflection Guide
Change from completing weekly to completing every fourth class period.
: Students struggling and very resistant to do reflection guide, especially EVERY week. Also, students often do not attend more than once a week (if that),so weekly reflection very difficult. Staff decided once every four class periods was a good amount of time to encourage reflection.

WEEKLY removed from the title
: See below.
Change first question from; This week I learned:; to; The most important things I learned:.
: Had to remove word "weekly" because students now complete every fourth class, also felt it would be useful to encourage students to reflect on "important" rather than just general learning.

Vocabulary Log
Change from; Where did you learn; to; Text where word found.
: Students did not understand "where" meant text and would document location, ie. MATC classroom, so changed question to be more specific and understandable.
Change from; Why is it important; to; Meaning of word.
: Students had difficultly analyzing importance, also, by adding meaning column, the log became a useful resource for the student to reference to remind them of the meaning.

Outside Reading Log
Add header stating "record any outside reading that is important or new" to student.
: Staff felt if students recorded everything they read outside of class, they would be writing all the time and writing things that might not be very important to their current learning.

Remove Title, Author column
: Students rarely completed and it was never used again as reference.
Change from; Number of pages read; to; number of pages/length read.
: It was found that sometimes the student was reading newspaper articles/letters/etc. that did not really have pages.

Outside Writing Log

Completely new in the spring
: Added writing to portfolio and felt it useful to record work/learning done outside of class.
Header stating "record any outside writing that is important or new" to student.
: Staff felt if students recorded everything they wrote outside of class, they would be writing all the time and writing things that might not be very important to their current learning.

Teacher Anecdotal Comments

No change
Discussed how instructors could better use the form spring semester.
: Staff verbalized problems with remembering to complete, suggested they keep in teacher journal which they complete daily. As well, they had difficulty being descriptive rather than evaluative.

Portfolio Sample

Change the three reading sample forms into one reading sample form which includes reading for enjoyment, reading for information and instructional reading activities.
: Too much paper to shuffle through and the students did not really understand the difference between the forms and often overlapped the use of the forms.

Removed the following questions:
What I enjoyed about this selection:
My purpose for reading this selection was:
What I learned from this selection:
What I learned about reading from this activity:
Why this activity was helpful OR not helpful:
: Could not have all the questions now that it was only one form. Staff decided three questions was enough to gather information/evaluate.
Kept/Added the following questions:
Why I chose this sample for my portfolio:
This sample was about:
What did you learn or like about this selection:
: Staff wanted to keep "Why" question and felt the second question should be some kind of summary so that comprehension could be evaluated. The final questions needed to be some kind of reaction/feeling.

Added a new form for the writing sample with three questions.
The writing sample form included personal writing, practical writing, instructional writing activities and essay writing.
: Now including writing in portfolio, so need a form to evaluate student progress and reactions.

Initial Interview Guide

Incorporated writing with seven existing reading questions.
: Writing new to the portfolio and did not want to add too many more questions to existing interview, so added writing to each question that included reading.
Add first question: What are your reasons (goals) for enrolling in this program?

: Staff felt it would be useful to ask students to think, up front, what their long term goal was and help them think about how reading/writing ties into those goals.
Add question: How does improving your reading and writing relate to your goals?
: Teachers had problems/concerns with students understanding how reading and the portfolio related to the their long term goal (often GED completion). Felt that adding this question might tie them together.
Remove question: What are your reasons for wanting to read better?
: The question regarding reading/writing relating to goals seemed to incorporate this question.
Add question: What do you think is important to know about you as a writer?
: This question encourages the student to begin self reflection of their learning from day one.
Change from; How do you learn best (listen, speak, watch, do)/ Please give a specific example of something you learned and how you learned it. Were you taught to do that or did you learn it on your own?; to; What do you do help yourself learn?
: Staff was having a hard time formulating Learning Strategy Goals on the Learning Plan. Felt this question would lead into a discussion on learning strategies more easily. As well this question easier to understand.
Add last question: What can be done to make it easier for you to study and get to class? How often and on what days do you plan to attend?
: A task force member suggested we try to get a commitment from students as to attendance/hours, so added this to interview to establish the expectation of accountability for attendance.

Learning Plan

Add header line: Class Schedule (days and times):
: A task force member suggested we try to get a commitment from students as to attendance/hours, so added this to establish the expectation of accountability for attendance.
Consolidate two columns into one to state: How do you plan to do it and when do you plan to do it?
: How to do and when to do seemed repetitive, however "when" did seem to reinforce a commitment to regular attendance. Decided

how and when different but related, so included in one space.
Add final column to be used at conference time: Progress, Date evaluated:.
: Too much paper and rewriting to have Learning Plan and Learning Plan Review so added "Progress" to Learning Plan and keep both goals and evaluation of progress on one form.
Change second row from; Problem Solving Goal; to; Writing Goal.
: Problem solving goal rarely used, and if used only remotely related to current learning. Needed space for new writing goal.

Learning Plan Review
Got rid of the entire form
: Repetitive of Learning Plan, added progress section to Learning Plan.

Initial Writing Assessment
New spring semester
Needed some kind of writing sample from the beginning of participation which could be compared to later samples for improvement/progress.

Learning Strategy Inventory
New spring semester
Learning Strategy Goal,on Learning Plan, not changed but found to be very difficult.
: Changed question on Initial Interview to ask student to think about how they learn best. Developed this inventory for use to help students identify things they do to help themselves learn currently and things would like to do in the future.

Portfolio Conference Guide
Do not complete monthly, only do mid-term and end semester.
: Too hard to set appointments and keep appointments monthly, as well students often had not completed much work within a month since they do not attend regularly. However, must still do conference at least mid-term, even if little or no work, so teacher and student can discuss what is happening.
Set appointments with students and do conference in a separate room, outside of the learning center.
: Too much distraction/to many interruptions in the learning center and thus not able to concentrate on evaluation.

Add writing to introductory statement
: Writing new to portfolio in spring.
Add Outside writing log and vocabulary log to changes question.
: Writing new to portfolio in spring, vocabulary log left off.
Moved questions around on the second page.
: Moved questions to better reflect whether they related to reading/writing skills and use or learning strategies.
Remove question: Have you learned anything new about reading from the work you've done? What did you learn? Has this helped you in any way?
: Hoped to get at students understanding of the reading process, but

never got specific answers, as well, reading process outcome removed from collaborative assessment form.

Add the following questions:

How do the changes you see affect the way you see yourself as a reader and writer?

In what ways do you think your reading has influenced your writing?

In what ways do you think your writing has influenced your reading?

: Wanted students to self-reflect and consider how academic areas are related to each other.

Change from; Have you used any special techniques to help you learn? What were these techniques?; to; What have you done to help yourself learn?

: Needed to use easier terms for students to understand.

Change from; What does your portfolio reveal about you as a learner?; to; If someone from the outside were to look at your portfolio, what would they think about you as a learner?

: Students did not understand initial question, they seemed less threatened when they thought about someone else reflecting on their portfolio.

Remove "Goals" heading and remove question: What progress have you made toward the learning goals on your learning plan?

: Review of goals and discussion of progress repetitive of the learning plan. Students will evaluate progress toward goals right on the learning plan.

Change from; Has anything made it hard for you to make progress? What can be done to make it easier for you to make progress toward your goals?; to; Has anything made it hard for you to make progress? What can be done to make it easier for you to learn?

: Removed "Goals" heading and felt it was more appropriate to evaluate overall learning on the portfolio conference guide.

Collaborative Assessment

Add header line about T=teacher, L=learner and T/L= teacher and learner and add a request to write T, L, T/L in each column.

: Staff concerned about what to do if the teacher and learner do not agree on outcomes to evaluate, ie. student skips important outcomes that the teacher felt were worked on. Did not want to add any more columns to lengthen the document, so asked that prior to each statement, a letter be documented indicating who felt this was an important outcome to evaluate and who stated what.

Delete "Awareness of reading process" from reading indicators.

: Difficult to understand what this means, each teacher had a different idea of how to interpret this indicator and it's progress.

Delete "increase in problem solving ability" from problem solving outcomes and remove problem solving as a outcome category.

: Problem solving goal rarely used, and if used only remotely related to current learning. Needed space for new writing outcomes.

Change from; Growth of higher order thinking skills; to; Growth of higher order reading skills; and move to reading outcomes.

: See above and felt it was important to evaluate higher order reading skills if appropriate.

Add all writing outcomes as follows:

Purpose and Details
Organization
Voice/Tone/Word Choice
Usage/Mechanics/Grammar
Use of writing process and strategies
Varied purposes and forms of writing

: Writing new to the portfolio in spring and needed criteria to evaluate progress. Outcomes developed from staff feedback and comparison of other portfolio projects.

Added directions for Teacher Summary Comments; (Please include comments regarding learning over period reviewed, aspects that might have impacted the learning, and recommendations for the next learning period.)

: Felt staff needed to provide this information to student to better help them see progress, factors effecting progress and future learning. Hoped this might model appropriate self-reflection.

Learner Portfolio Instructions, Learner Outcomes for Assessment and Teacher Tips were all modified to include the form and procedure changes/additions made between the Fall and Spring.

Summary Portfolio Materials

Only do the summary portfolio at the end of the entire year or if student notifies teacher they want to leave the project.

: Too much work to do summary two times a year, as well, students do not have enough work to include and fully evaluate after only one semester.

Added cover page and introduction for summary portfolio.

: Gives the summary portfolio validity and provides information/overview on the project, summary portfolio and the persons who designed and implemented the portfolios.

Restructured the table of contents and added Outside writing log and Initial writing assessment as summary portfolio contents.

: Writing new to the portfolio in spring.

Change from; Problem-Solving Goals:; to; Writing Goals:.

: Problem solving goal rarely used, and if used only remotely related to current learning. Needed space for new writing goals.

Change Summary Collaborative Assessment form to look just like spring Collaborative Assessment.

: See above and remove Student Comments since they summarize progress in goals on Summary Learning Plan and summarize overall learning in the "Who I am as a reader/writer/learner" essay.

Add "writer" to "Who I am as a reader/learner" essay.

: Writing new to portfolio in spring.

TABLE 2
MATC Portfolio Assessment Project
Student Attendance Data

(D=Downtown, P=Portage, S=Stoughton)

Site	Semester	All ILC Students	Total Hours	Avg. #/Hrs.	Level 2 Students *	Level 2 Hours	Avg. #/Hrs.	Portfolio Students	Portfolio Student Hrs.	Avg. #/Hrs.	Avg. #/Weeks
D	Fall '93	583	7673.0	13.16	159	2832.4	17.81	8	612.54	76.57	13.25
	Spring '94	638	9651.1	15.13	194	5309.1	27.37	7	322.20	40.03	8.57
P	Fall '93	81	1444.0	17.83	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	274.50	54.90	10.40
	Spring '94	94	1785.0	18.99	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	90.75	90.75	18.00
S	Fall '93	16	244.0	15.25	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	53.00	17.67	9.67
	Spring '94	15	221.0	14.73	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	68.50	34.25	12.50

* With lab hours greater than zero

ATTACHMENTS

1. Final Working Portfolio Materials

2. Final Summary Portfolio Materials

WORKING PORTFOLIO MATERIALS

Learner Portfolio Instructions

Learner Outcomes for Assessment

Initial Interview Guide

Learning Plan

Writing Assessment

Learning Strategy Inventory

Learning Log

Vocabulary Log

Outside Reading Log

Outside Writing Log

Portfolio Samples

Reflection Guide

Portfolio Conference Guide

Collaborative Portfolio Assessment

Learning Outcomes for Assessment - Teacher Conference Version

Learner Portfolio Teacher Tips

LEARNER PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS

This is a guide to help you understand how to use and fill out the forms in this portfolio. It will also tell you how often you will need to fill out these forms. The forms are filled out by either you on your own or together with the teacher. One form is completed by the teacher alone.

Forms Completed By The Learner

Learning Plan	DONE AT THE BEGINNING AND AT CONFERENCES
Learning Log	DONE EACH TIME YOU ARE AT CLASS
Outside Reading Log	DONE EACH TIME YOU READ
Outside Writing Log	DONE EACH TIME YOU WRITE
Vocabulary Log	DONE EACH TIME YOU LEARN A WORD
Portfolio Sample (Reading or Writing)	DONE WEEKLY
Reflection Guide	DONE EVERY FOURTH CLASS

Forms Completed By The Learner And Teacher

Initial Interview Guide	DONE AT THE BEGINNING
Portfolio Conference Guide	DONE AT CONFERENCES TWO TIMES A SEMESTER

Form Completed By The Teacher

Teacher Anecdotal Comments	DONE PERIODICALLY

The following information will further help you to fill out the forms. Please look back at this guide when you are unsure of what to include on the forms.

Forms Completed By The Learner

Learning Plan

This form will be done by you, the learner. You will discuss all of the areas with your teacher during the initial interview. Feel free to ask your teacher about any part of this form. The progress column will be done at the conference.

Learning Log

This log is a list of learning activities and tasks you are working on during your time in the learning center. You will fill it out every time you work in the learning center. You will write down the date, the learning activities you did that day and any comments you might want to make. You will also write down plans for the next time you are in class.

Outside Reading Log

This log is a list of all the things you read **outside** of the learning center. You will fill it out each time you read something new or of importance outside of the learning center. You will write down the date, the type of reading you read, the number of pages/length you read that day.

Vocabulary Log

This log is a list of the new words you learn in your studies. You will fill it out each time you learn a new word. You will write down the date, the new word, the text you found it in and the meaning of the word.

Portfolio Sample Guide (Reading or Writing)

This form is used weekly when you select samples of work you have done this week that you want to include in your portfolio. Please select sample selections that represent the progress you have made toward your goals this week. The Portfolio Sample sheet states why you chose it and has questions on what the sample was about or your writing skills. You will date and describe each sample with several words. Please staple the Portfolio Sample sheet to the actual sample.

Reflection Guide

This form will be done every fourth time you attend class. Review your learning log, your outside reading and writing logs and the samples you have chosen for your portfolio. You will then answer five questions about what you learned during this time. Your answers can be one or two sentences or more. Your reflection guides will be reviewed at your conference meetings.

Forms Completed By The Learner And Teacher

Initial Interview Guide

This form will be completed by you, the learner, and the teacher at the beginning of your instruction. The purpose of the form is to help you and the teacher learn about your reasons to read and write, beliefs about reading and writing, learning preferences, work experiences, family and barriers to learning. The teacher will ask you the questions and write down your answers. The answers to the questions will help identify goals and activities that will meet your interests and needs. The Learning Plan will be discussed at this time as well.

Portfolio Conference Guide

This form will be completed by you, the learner, and the teacher at each conference meeting held two times a semester. The purpose of this form is to review the materials in your portfolio and discuss what you have learned. You will discuss your reading and writing skills and use of reading and writing and learning strategies. You will complete a Collaborative Portfolio Assessment form as part of the conference. You will also complete the Progress section of the Learning Plan now.

Collaborative Assessment Guide

On this form you will assess how you are progressing with your goals using the portfolio learner outcomes. The Learning Outcomes can be found stapled to the front of the portfolio. You and the teacher will decide which outcomes you have worked on during this time. The teacher will go over this form with you and each of you will describe ways you have progressed and evidence of this progression.

Form Completed By The Teacher

Teacher Anecdotal Comments

This form will be done by the teacher periodically. The teacher will make comments that describe an educational event, process or product; report events or products rather than evaluate them; and relate the material to known facts. The teacher will date each entry and state whether it is an observation of an event (seen in the classroom) by writing an "O" or a review of a product (sample) by writing an "R". A description will be written and then the teacher will comment on what you did in relation to the educational event, process or product. You may read the teachers anecdotal comments at any time.

LEARNER OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT

This is a guide to tell you what you and your instructors will be assessing in your learning. The "outcomes" are the area of learning that you will be working on. "Work that shows progress" is the work and types of activities that show progress in the learning area. Please use this guide to help you think about what you are learning, why you are learning it and how you will tell if you have learned what you need.

BASIC READING SKILLS

OUTCOMES	Comprehension skills
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- able to read things that are harder - able to find the facts and state the facts - able to summarize and explain the reading
OUTCOMES	Word Knowledge/Vocabulary
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- number of words on Vocabulary Log - uses different words - uses harder words
OUTCOMES	Variety of reading
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- reads different kinds of reading - reads for different reasons
OUTCOMES	Amount of reading
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- reads more often - reads more materials
OUTCOMES	Growth of higher level reading skills (application, synthesis, analysis, evaluation)
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- able to use new information in other situations - able to see different ideas in the information - able to bring ideas together - able to evaluate information and ideas

BASIC WRITING SKILLS

OUTCOMES	Purpose and Details
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *clarity of purpose *development of ideas *appropriateness for audience and task *use of supporting details
OUTCOMES	Organization
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *use of transitions *logical sequence of ideas *use of introduction and conclusion *overall unity and coherence *pacing
OUTCOMES	Voice/Tone/Word Choice
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *evidence of personal expression *tone appropriate to purpose *accurate choice of wording *use of precise and specific language *use of natural language
OUTCOMES	Usage/Mechanics/Grammar
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *usage (tense formation, agreement, word choice) *mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation) *grammar *sentence structure
OUTCOME	Use of writing process and strategies
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-increased use of prewriting strategies (brainstorming, outlining, free writing, concept mapping, etc.) -writes and revises multiple drafts of writing -seeks and uses feedback from others more often -greater use of available resources for writing -greater ability to identify and correct errors (in own writing and writing of others, instructional activities, etc.) -individual pieces show greater improvement from first to later drafts
OUTCOME	Varied purposes and forms of writing
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writes for more varied reasons (for self-expression, for work-related purposes, for learning, etc.) -writes with more varied purposes (to describe, explain, persuade, etc.) -writes in more varied forms (letters, memos, resumes, forms, essays, etc.)

LEARNING TO LEARN

OUTCOMES	Ability to self assess (strengths, achievements, limits)
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- can be specific in describing strengths, achievements & limits - able to give examples to show progress - able to assess different skills - able to see meaningful learning experiences
OUTCOMES	Ability to set goals
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- sets goals that get more specific - goals get more meaningful - able to set more goals
OUTCOMES	Awareness/use of learning strategies
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- uses more kinds of strategies - able to see and understand strategies used - able to see how strategies helped and worked - more able to use different strategies at different times
OUTCOMES	Increase in self direction/motivation/responsibility
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- more interested and excited about learning - chooses more activities and reading on own - does more assessment on own - feels better about learning abilities

INITIAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date: ______________________________

Learner Name: ______________________________

Teacher Name: ______________________________

These questions will help us document your:
- current basic skills;
- current use of reading and writing skills;
- current learning strategies;
- learning goals; and
- barriers to learning.

What are your reasons (goals) for enrolling in this program?

Reasons to read and write
How does improving your reading and writing relate to your goals?

What specific things would you like to read and write better?

What do you think might change as a result of your reading and writing better?

What kind of reading and writing do you do on your own? When and how often? What kinds of things do you like to read and write most?

Beliefs About Reading and Writing

How would you describe yourself as a reader? [What are your strengths as a reader? What are your biggest problems as a reader?]

What do you think is important to know about you as a writer?

What makes someone a "good" reader and writer?

What do you think you need to do to become a better reader and writer?

Learning Preferences

What do you do to help yourself learn?

What kind of teaching works best for you?

Have you ever used a computer before? How do you feel about learning something about using computers?

When you were in school, what did you enjoy most? What did you like about that?

Were there things in school you didn't like? Why did you dislike them?

Adult Education Experiences

Have you ever been to classes for adult education before? If so, where, when, what was it like for you?

Work Experiences

Do you have a job now? If so, what kind of work do you do? If not, what kinds of jobs have you had in the past?

What kinds of reading and writing do you do at work?

What do you enjoy doing on the job, at home, or in your neighborhood?

Family
Do you have a family? How do they feel about you coming to school?

Barriers
What kinds of things do you think might make it hard for you to study and to get to class?

What can be done to make it easier for you to study and get to class? How often and on what days do you plan to attend?

Please remember to establish learning goals between the learner and the instructor by completing the LEARNING PLAN at this time. Feel free to do a learning strategy inventory and/or writing assessment as well.

LEARNING PLAN

Learner's Name: ____________________________ Date: ________________ Date for Review of Plan: _________

Class Schedule (days and times):_______________________________________

What do you want to learn?	How do you plan to do it and When do you plan to do it?	Progress Date evaluated
Reading Goals:		
Writing Goals:		
Learning Strategy Goals:		
Other Goals:		

MATC ALTERNATIVE LEARNING DIVISION
PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Initial Writing Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this writing assessment is to give you and your teacher some information about your strengths in writing and possible areas for improvement. After you complete the writing task, you and your teacher will review it together. You may identify specific learning goals for writing to add to your learning plan.

Directions

Write at least one paragraph about one of the topics listed below. There is no time limit for this assessment. You may use a dictionary while you are working on the paragraph.

Possible Topics
(choose one)

1. Adults have many different reasons for continuing their education. Write about why you decided to attend classes at MATC. Why did you choose to enroll at this time in your life?

2. Many people have strong feelings about issues and topics such as abortion, gun control, welfare. Choose an issue that you feel strongly about and write about your opinion on the issue. Explain what you believe and why you have this opinion.

3. Think about something important that happened to you in the past. Write about this time so that the reader will understand what happened and why it was important to you.

Editing Suggestions

After you have written your paragraph, be sure to read it over. Ask yourself the questions on the next page and make any changes that you think are needed.

Questions for Editing

1. Is my paragraph clearly written?

2. Are my ideas well-organized?

3. Does my writing show my own voice and personal expression?

3. Have I chosen the best words to express my ideas?

4. Are my sentences clear and complete?

5. Are my spelling, capitalization, and punctuation correct?

Be sure to indent the first line of your paragraph. Remember that you can use a dictionary as you correct your work.

Learning Strategy Inventory

Name:______________________________		Date:__________
This inventory is an OPTIONAL check list to see what strategies you use to help you learn. Please check those items you already do to help you learn. Then, check those items you would like to learn. You may wish to set goals using these items.		
LEARNING STRATEGY	**I CURRENTLY DO THIS**	**I WOULD LIKE TO DO THIS**
Plan my homework		
Organize study time		
Manage my time		
Set a schedule		
Follow directions		
Use the dictionary/encyclopedia		
Use the table of contents in a book		
Use a book's index/glossary		
Use the library/get help from the librarian		
Read to myself		
Associate new material with what I already know		
Listen carefully for important points		
Have a certian place to study		
Ask questions when I am unsure		
Choose times to learn when I am most alert (when?)		
Break large assignments into smaller ones		
Skim/scan materials		
Take tests		
Summarize text		
Self-question		
Use graphic clues		
Review/reread material		
Underline/highlight text		
Take notes		
Use note cards		
Make an outline/chart/map		
Preview material		
Use mnemonics (tricks/rhymes to help remember)		

LEARNING LOG

Learner Name: ______________________________

The following will help you to fill out this form.
DATE—What is today's date?
LEARNING ACTIVITIES DONE TODAY—What did you work on today? (i.e, did you read a poem and answer questions, read a manual for work, figure out a brain teaser, write questions about something you read, or work on the computer?)
COMMENTS—Do you have anything you would like to say about today's work?
PLANS FOR NEXT TIME—What activities do you plan to work on next time you attend class?

** Remember to complete a Reflection Guide at this time (every fourth class session).

DATE	LEARNING ACTIVITIES DONE TODAY	COMMENTS	PLANS FOR NEXT TIME
**			

DATE	LEARNING ACTIVITIES DONE TODAY	COMMENTS	PLANS FOR NEXT TIME
**			
**			

VOCABULARY LOG

Learner Name: ______________________________

The following will help you to fill out this form.
DATE—What is the date you learned this new word?
NEW WORD—What is the new word you learned?
TEXT WHERE WORD FOUND--In what text did you find the word?
MEANING OF WORD--What is the meaning of the word?

DATE	NEW WORD	TEXT WHERE WORD FOUND	MEANING OF WORD

DATE	NEW WORD	TEXT WHERE WORD FOUND	MEANING OF WORD

OUTSIDE WRITING LOG

Learner Name: ______________________________

You should use this log to record any outside writing that is important or new for you. The following directions will help you to fill out this form.

DATE—What is the date that you did this writing?

WHAT I WROTE—What did you write? (i.e., short story, GED essay, journal, application, letter, workbook, poetry, language experience story, resume, memo or anything you write outside of school that is important or new.)

PURPOSE FOR WRITING-- Why did you write this piece?

DATE	WHAT I WROTE	PURPOSE FOR WRITING

DATE	WHAT I WROTE	PURPOSE FOR WRITING

OUTSIDE READING LOG

Learner Name: ______________________________

You should use this log to record any outside reading that is important or new for you. The following directions will help you to fill out this form.

DATE—What is the date that you did this reading?

TYPE OF READING—What did you read? (i.e., novel, magazine or newspaper article, short story, encyclopedia, cookbook, work manual, text book, advertizement, or anything you read outside of school that was important or new.)

NUMBER OF PAGES/LENGTH READ—How many pages did you read or how long was the article?

DATE	TYPE OF READING	NUMBER OF PAGES/ LENGTH READ

DATE	TYPE OF READING	NUMBER OF PAGES/ LENGTH READ
	131	132

TEACHER ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

Learner Name: ______________________________

Anecdotal comments should:

1. describe a specific educational event, process or product;
2. report rather than evaluate;
3. relate the material to other known facts about the student.

DATE	O/R	OBSERVED LEARNING EVENT (O)/ REVIEWED LEARNING PRODUCT (R)	SPECIFIC STUDENT PERFORMANCE

DATE	O/R	OBSERVED LEARNING EVENT (O)/ REVIEWED LEARNING PRODUCT (R)	SPECIFIC STUDENT PERFORMANCE

WRITING SAMPLE

Reflection Guide

Directions:
Complete this form for a piece of writing or writing exercise that you choose to include in your portfolio.

You might choose a sample from the following types of writing:

1. personal writing: stories, poems, journal entries, letters, responses to reading, or other personal writing
2. practical writing: memos, directions, letters, resumes, or other writing that you do for work or other purposes
3. instructional writing activities: GED workbook exercises, other commercial instructional activities, teacher-developed activities
4. essay writing: practice essays for the GED, essays and reports for other classes

The portfolio sample should include a copy of the completed piece of writing or writing exercise. If you wrote more than one draft of the piece, include copies of all drafts as well as the final piece.

Date: ____________________

Learner Name: ____________________________________

Description of Sample: ____

1. Why I chose this sample for my portfolio:

2. What I like best about this piece of writing:

3. Which of my writing skills or ideas I am least satisfied with in this piece and why:

READING SAMPLE

Reflection Guide

Directions:
Complete this form with an example of something you read that you choose to include in your portfolio.

You might choose a sample from the following types of reading:

1. reading for enjoyment might be novels, stories, poems, magazines or anything else that you read for pleasure.

2. reading for information might be written instructions, newspaper articles, classified ads, nonfiction books, brochures, recipes, or anything else that you read for information.

3. an instructional reading activity might be a GED workbook exercise, another activity from one of your textbooks, an activity given to you by your teacher, or one that you select.

The portfolio sample should include a copy of the entire piece or the title page.

Date: ____________________

Learner Name: ____________________________________

Description of Sample: ______________________________________

Why I chose this sample for my portfolio:

This sample was about:

What did you learn or like about this selection:

REFLECTION GUIDE

Name: ______________________________ **Week:** ____________________

Complete this form after every **fourth** time you have attended class/learning center. Make sure to consider your learning experiences over this whole period of time.

1. The most important things I learned:

2. Changes that let me know I am making progress are:

3. It was easy for me to:

4. I had difficulties with:

5. My learning plans for next week are:

PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE GUIDE

Date: ____

Learner Name: ______________________________

Teacher Name: ______________________________

The purpose of this conference is to review the materials in your portfolio and discuss what you have learned. These questions will help us identify changes in specific areas, including:

- your reading and writing skills
- your use of reading and writing in and out of class
- your learning strategies
- progress toward your learning goals

Start by reviewing the contents of your portfolio, including your initial interview, learning plan, writing assessment, learning log, outside reading and writing logs, sample learning activities, and reflection guides.

Reading and Writing Skills and Use of Reading and Writing
Looking back over your portfolio, what do you notice?

How do you think your reading and writing has changed? What changes are reflected in:

your learning log

your outside reading and writing logs

your vocabulary log

your learning samples

your reflection guides

How do the changes you see affect the way you see yourself as a reader and writer?

In what ways do you think your reading has influenced your writing?
In what ways do you think your writing has influenced your reading?

How have the changes you have seen affected other parts of your life?

Learning Strategies
What have you done to help yourself learn?

Has anything made it hard for you to learn and make progress? What can be done to make it easier for you to learn?

If someone from the outside were to look at your portfolio, what would they think about you as a learner?

Please remember to complete a new LEARNING PLAN and the COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT with the learner at this time.

COLLABORATIVE PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Learner Name:______________________________ Date:________________

This form will be completed by the teacher and learner at the portfolio conference.
T = Teacher assessment, L = Learner assessment, T/L = Teacher and learner combined assessment.

SELECT (Mark ones worked on with T, L or T/L)	**LEARNING OUTCOMES**	**INDICATORS OF LEARNING** (Please be learner centered and state specific examples.) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to statement.	**PORTFOLIO CONTENTS INDICATING LEARNING** (state forms/dates) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to form.
T | L	**READING OUTCOMES** Comprehension skills		
	Word knowledge/ Vocabulary		
	Variety of reading		
	Amount of reading		
	Growth of higher level reading skills		
	WRITING OUTCOMES Purpose and Details		
	Organization		

SELECT (Mark ones worked on with T, L or T/L)	LEARNING OUTCOMES	INDICATORS OF LEARNING (Please be learner centered and state specific examples.) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to statement.	PORTFOLIO CONTENTS INDICATING LEARNING (state forms/dates) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to form.
T | L	**WRITING OUTCOMES CONTINUED**		
	Voice/Tone/Word Choice		
	Usage/Mechanics/Grammar		
	Use of writing process and strategies		
	Varied purposes and forms of writing		
	LEARNING TO LEARN OUTCOMES		
	Ability to self assess		
	Ability to set goals		
	Awareness/use of learning strategies		
	Increase in self direction/motivation and responsibility		

STUDENT SUMMARY COMMENTS:

TEACHER SUMMARY COMMENTS:
(Please include comments regarding learning over period reviewed, aspects that might have impacted the learning, and recommendations for the next learning period.)

LEARNING PLAN

Learner's Name: ______________________ Date: ______________ Date for Review of Plan: ______

Class Schedule (days and times): ________________________________

What do you want to learn?	How do you plan to do it and When do you plan to do it?	Progress Date evaluated ______
Reading Goals:		
Writing Goals:		
Learning Strategy Goals:		
Other Goals:		

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT
TEACHER CONFERENCE VERSION

BASIC READING SKILLS

OUTCOMES Comprehension skills
: Learning plan (reading goals progress)
WHERE TO : Sample/Reflection guide (What I learned about reading)
FIND : Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Learning log (learning activities done today)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS : ability to understand written material at increasing
OF PROGRESS levels of difficulty
(can identify and recall facts, summarize and
explain meaning, etc.)

OUTCOMES Word Knowledge/Vocabulary
: Learning plan (reading goals progress)
WHERE TO : Sample/Reflection guide (What I learned about reading)
FIND : Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Learning log (learning activities done today)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)
: Outside reading log (change in type of reading)
: Vocabulary Log
: All student written material (change in vocabulary use)

INDICATORS : number of vocabulary words on log/map
OF PROGRESS : use of greater variety of vocabulary
: increasing sophistication of vocabulary

OUTCOMES Variety of reading
WHERE TO : Outside reading log (different types)
FIND : Sample/Reflection guide (variety of samples)

INDICATORS : reads a greater variety of material across genre
OF PROGRESS and for different purposes

OUTCOMES Amount of reading
WHERE TO : Outside reading log (number of entries)
FIND : Sample/Reflection guide (choice/number of samples)

INDICATORS : reads more frequently
OF PROGRESS : reads greater number of texts/materials

OUTCOMES Growth of higher level reading skills
(application, synthesis, analysis, evaluation)
: Portfolio conference guide (goals)
WHERE TO : Reflection guide (changes making progress)
FIND : Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)
: Sample/Reflection guide (why choose)
: Portfolio learning plan (progress)

INDICATORS : greater ability to apply new information to
OF PROGRESS other situations
: greater ability to identify underlying ideas
in body of information
: greater ability to combine new information,
synthesize and integrate ideas
: greater ability to evaluate ideas and information

BASIC WRITING SKILLS

OUTCOMES	Purpose and Details
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	- writing shows improvement in *clarity of purpose *development of ideas *appropriateness for audience and task *use of supporting details
OUTCOMES	Organization
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *use of transitions *logical sequence of ideas *use of introduction and conclusion *overall unity and coherence *pacing
OUTCOMES	Voice/Tone/Word Choice
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *evidence of personal expression *tone appropriate to purpose *accurate choice of wording *use of precise and specific language *use of natural language
OUTCOMES	Usage/Mechanics/Grammar
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *usage (tense formation, agreement, word choice) *mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation) *grammar *sentence structure
OUTCOME	Use of writing process and strategies
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder : Outside Writing Log : Reflection Guide
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-increased use of prewriting strategies (brainstorming, outlining, free writing, concept mapping, etc.)

\portf\woutc January 19, 1994

-writes and revises multiple drafts of writing
-seeks and uses feedback from others more often
-greater use of available resources for writing
-greater ability to identify and correct errors (in own writing and writing of others, instructional activities, etc.)
-individual pieces show greater improvement from first to later drafts

OUTCOME Varied purposes and forms of writing

WHERE TO FIND
: Writing Sample guide
: other writing in work folder
: Outside Writing Log

WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS
- writes for more varied reasons (for self-expression, for work-related purposes, for learning, etc.)
- writes with more varied purposes (to describe, explain, persuade, etc.)
- writes in more varied forms (letters, memos, resumes, forms, essays, etc.)

LEARNING TO LEARN

OUTCOMES Ability to self assess
(strengths, achievements, limits)

WHERE TO FIND
: Initial interview guide VS. Portfolio conference guide
: Learning Plan (progress)
: Portfolio conference guide (reading skills/use & goals)
: Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Sample/reflection guide (What I learned)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: becomes more specific in describing strengths, achievements, limits
: more able to support assessment with appropriate examples
: able to assess growing variety of abilities (breadth of assessment)
: awareness of meaningful learning experiences

OUTCOMES Ability to set goals

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning Plan
: Portfolio conference guide (goals)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: goals become more specific
: goals become more meaningful/realistic
: able to generate more goals

OUTCOMES Awareness/use of learning strategies

WHERE TO FIND
: Portfolio conference guide (learning strategies)
: Reflection guide
: Learning plan (what then how/progress)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: uses greater variety of strategies
: shows greater awareness of strategies used
: greater ability to select/vary strategy as appropriate to the task

OUTCOMES Increase in self direction/motivation/responsibility –

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning plan (type of goals/new goals)
: Reflection guide (next week/changes)
: Learning log (next time)
: Portfolio conference guide
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: demonstrates increasing interest and enthusiasm for learning
: takes greater initiative in selecting activities and reading material
: takes greater initiative in assessment activities (selecting samples, etc.)
: increasing confidence in learning abilities

LEARNER PORTFOLIO TEACHER TIPS

This is a guide of suggested ways to introduce the portfolio and forms to students. These are merely suggestions, however the points made in the tips are important for the students to know and if used, will help establish consistency between the sites.

AT THE INITIAL INTERVIEW

Initial Interview Guide

The purpose of the initial interview is to obtain information on a students current basic skills, use of reading and writing skills, learning strategies, barriers and learning goals. The interview should be taken in order, by asking the students the questions and documenting their response. Feel free to ask the students to read what you have written so that it reflects what they actually said. Make sure to do the **Learning Plan** after you have completed the initial interview.

Learning Plan

The purpose of the learning plan is to allow the learner to set their learning goals for the month. The initial interview can give you and the learner many suggestions for goals (Reasons to read and write, Learning preferences and Barriers may be especially helpful). A few important things to remember about this form:

- Always set the Date for Review of Plan (the conference) before the end of this meeting.
- A learner may NOT have a goal in all areas.
- What do you want to do? should be specific and short term. (You may want to reference the initial interview answers or the problem solving, critical thinking and learning strategy cheat sheets given to you during training.)
- How do you plan to do it/When do you plan to do it? should be written to last over a month (i.e., read each chapter a week).
- Progress Date: should be filled in at the portfolio conference that was scheduled in the Date for Review of Plan section of this form. Please document progress toward the goals at that time.

Learning Log

The purpose of the learning log is to record what the learner has been working on in class. It also lets the learner take responsibility for recording and keeping track of their learning. Review the directions and the parts of the form (date, learning activities done todayg comments, plans for next time) with the learner. Point out that this is a record that documents what they have been doing in class and is very important. This record will help both you and the learner keep track of what is actually being done in class and help you to plan future activities. For practice, you might ask the learner to fill out the form using what they did today or what they did last time they were in class. Note that each fourth class entry has a reminder to complete the reflection guide, which you will discuss later with the learner.

Outside Reading Log

The purpose of the outside reading log is to have a record of what the learner reads not only in schoolwork but also in their every day life. It may also help the learner see that reading is a big part of their daily activities and encourage reading in other parts of their life. Start by reviewing the directions and the three parts of the form (date, type of reading, # of pages) with the learner. Stress that this is a record of all **new and/or important things** that the learner reads, but not just reading specifically for "schoolwork". You might give examples of reading that might be overlooked, instructions, forms, children's schoolwork, and so forth. This record will help both of you see how the learner actually uses reading skills outside of class. You might emphasize the importance of keeping a regular and complete record. For practice, you might have the learner fill out an entry or two using something read during the week.

Outside Writing Log

The purpose of the outside writing log is to have a record of what the learner writes in their every day life. As above, it may also help the learner see that writing does occur in their daily activities and encourage writing in other parts of their life. Start by reviewing the directions and the parts of the form (date, what I wrote, purpose for writing) with the learner. Stress that this is a record of anything **new or important** that the learner writes, not just writing specifically for "schoolwork". This record will help both of you see how the learner actually uses writing outside of class. You might emphasize the importance of keeping a regular and complete record. For practice, you might have the learner fill out an entry using something written at home during the week.

Vocabulary Log

The purpose of the vocabulary log is to keep track of the new words a learner is learning **in their reading** and to identify in what text they are learning new words. Again, review the directions and the four parts of the form (date, new word, text found, meaning). You might want to let the learner know that this can be referenced when ever they need to know a meaning of a word they identified. Also point out that there may be days or weeks without any new words and other times when there are many words in one day. You might have the learner fill out an entry or two using words learned that week. If the learner is particularly interested in vocabulary development, you can plan to teach word mapping or other vocabulary activities later on (refer to handouts from training).

Teacher Anecdotal Comments

The purpose of the teacher anecdotal comments is to allow the teacher to make observations about a student or review portfolio material by describing the event, process or product but **not** evaluating. This form can be used periodically for each student and is a good way to document aspects of the student's learning that the portfolio is not otherwise showing. The student may read this form at any time.

AT THE SECOND MEETING (ONE WEEK AFTER THE INITIAL INTERVIEW)

Briefly review the learning log, outside reading and writing logs and vocabulary log to make sure the learner has understood and completed them appropriately. Then discuss the forms that learner should complete approximately weekly. You might have the learner choose a particular day (i.e.; Thursday or Friday) for completing these forms on a regular basis.

Portfolio Samples

The purpose of the portfolio sample questions is to encourage the learners to reflect on what they read and write and document why they chose the sample. Begin by explaining that the learner will choose one sample of her/his reading and/or writing to place into the portfolio each week. There are three different types of reading that might be included. Discuss each type of reading by reviewing the header of the form with the learner. Explain that only one type, instructional reading activity, is classroom reading. The other types of reading are done outside of class, reading for enjoyment and reading for instructions, and would also be recorded on the outside reading log. Point out that the learner should bring in the actual reading material (or a copy, or a copy of the title page and/or table of contents for longer readings) to be **included** in the portfolio. Explain that there are four types of writing. Discuss each type of writing by reviewing the header of the form with the learner. Stress that the learner need only fill out **one** reflection guide per week, and should choose the guide that is appropriate for the selected reading or writing sample. Assure the learner that her/his responses on the guide can be as brief or as long as s/he wishes. The learner can choose whatever reading or writing sample that s/he feels was important that week. However, encourage the learner to vary the type of sample selected from week to week. For practice, have the learner choose a reading and/or writing sample from the previous week, select the appropriate guide, and answer the questions.

Reflection Guide

The purpose of the reflection guide is to have the students reflect on their learning over the last four they have attended class, to examine strengths and limits and to teach self assessment skills. Explain the importance of the reflection guide as a tool for assessing progress **regularly**. Review the five questions. Perhaps the best approach is to have the learner complete the guide for the previous week as you discuss each item. Assure the learner that her/his responses can be as brief or as long as s/he wishes.

Assessment Guide

Point out the guide entitled "Learner Outcomes for Assessment" stapled under the learner portfolio instructions on the left of the portfolio. Explain that this guide will help both of you assess the progress made by the learner during the semester. The guide outlines three possible areas of learner: basic reading skills, basic writing skills and learning how to learn skills [you might also say there are many other kinds of learning , but this just what will be assessed in the portfolio]. Each area has a list of outcomes (specific skills the learner might develop), and a set of examples of progress for each outcome. Review the list with the learner. Explain that you will use the list to evaluate the portfolio contents together at the conference. Look at the learner's goals (on the Learning Plan) and discuss what outcomes might be used to assess progress towards the learner's goals. Mark these outcomes so you can refer to them at the conference. Encourage the learner to refer to the list to think about what s/he has learned each week.

Initial Writing Assessment

The purpose of the initial writing assessment is to measure the learner's writing skills at the beginning of the semester/year. If the learner has writing as a goal, you will need to get some type of initial (first) writing sample. You may use a current (within the last month) writing sample from class or else you will need to ask the learner to do this initial writing assessment. The learner will pick one of the possible topics and write at least one paragraph. Let the learner know there is no time limit and they may use a dictionary and refer to the editing suggestions/questions at any time. Remind them this is not a test, just a way to find out their writing skills. After the learner has completed the assessment and you have reviewed it, remember to meet with the learner and discuss possible goals related to writing.

AT THE PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE

You might want to remind the student one week prior to the conference of the date and time of the meeting. You should also ask the student to review his/her portfolio **prior** to coming to the conference. You will want to briefly review the entire contents of the portfolio, including the initial interview, writing assessment, learning plan, learning log, outside reading and writing logs, portfolio samples, weekly reflection guide, teacher comments and the work folder to prepare yourself for the conference as well.

Portfolio Conference Guide

The purpose of the portfolio conference is to allow a time to review the materials in the students portfolio and discuss what has been learned and accomplished in the areas of reading and writing skills, use of reading and writing and learning strategies. The guide should be taken in order and read verbatim, by asking the students the questions and documenting their response. Feel free to ask the students to read what you have written so that it reflects what they actually said. Make sure to do the Collaborative Portfolio Assessment Form (using the learner outcomes for assessment guide stapled in the portfolio folder and the teacher version)and a new Learning Plan after you have completed the conference guide.

Collaborative Portfolio Assessment

1. Do the portfolio assessment after you and the student complete the portfolio conference guide, but before you do the new learning plan.

2. Point out that the assessment form reflects the outcomes listed on the pages stapled to the front cover of the working portfolio. The learner and you will identify relevant learning outcomes by checking them in the first column of the form. You may need to review the meaning of each outcome with the student by having them read the outcomes and the explanations to see if they are focusing on these types of activities. To select relevant outcomes, consider what you and the learner checked at the initial interview or last conference. Again review the learner's goals and decide what outcomes can be used to indicate progress toward those goals. For outcomes NOT selected, it would be helpful to note on the form why they were not selected.

3. Note that you and the learner can choose different outcomes to document if your opinions differ. Be sure to indicate L. T or T/L next to each outcome (as well as by the indicators and evidence). Be sure to discuss any differences with the learner. Keep in mind that this process is intended to be a learning experience for the learner as well as an opportunity for assessing progress. You may reference the teacher conference version of the Learning Outcomes for Assessment guide lists to remember where to find evidence and possible indicators of learning for each outcome.

4. After you and the learner complete the form, you may wish to review the portfolio materials again to identify any evidence of learning that might not have been documented. You may find that some outcomes you did not check initially can be used to document these outcomes. Feel free to complete the assessment process for the learner. Any additional outcomes can be documented in the summary comments section where both you and the learner will write thoughts on this learning period, what effected it and future recommendations.

5. Both you and the student will make comments in the Summary Comment sections at the end of the form. Here you can summarize the most important learning outcomes and make additional comments about the learning. You might also use these sections for a general reaction to the process of assessment, how it was helpful or not helpful, what you learned from it, etc. This can be done at the conference or later, as long as it is completed.

6. Then go on to discussing new goals for the next month, have the student document progress on their old learning plan and prepare a new learning plan.

7. Finally, together you and the student should choose outcomes related to the learner's goals that are most important for the student to work on in the coming month. You might mark them on the Learning Outcomes for Assessment guide in the students' portfolio, or note them on the students' new learning plan.

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO MATERIALS

Cover Sheet

Introduction

Overview

Contents

Summary Learning Plan

Summary Collaborative Portfolio Assessment

Summary Portfolio Learning Outcomes for Assessment -
Teacher Conference Version

Who I am as a Reader/Writer/Learner

Additional Sample Rationale

The following materials are also included in the summary portfolio but are not included in this attachment (see working portfolio materials):

Samples of learning activities
Daily Learning Log
Outside Reading Log
Outside Writing Log
Vocabulary Log
Initial Writing Assessment

MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Alternative Learning Division

ADULT BASIC SKILLS SUMMARY PORTFOLIO

Learner Name: ____________________

Teacher Name: ____________________

Date Prepared: ____________________

Portfolio designed by:

Elisabeth Hayes
Department of Continuing and Vocational Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Karen Johnson Kretschmann
Alternative Learning Division, Madison Area Technical College

with assistance from:
Mary Ann Berry, Barbara Jantz, Mary Kay Moser, and Sharon Thieding
Alternative Learning Division, Madison Area Technical College

The development of the portfolio materials was supported by a 353 grant from the Wisconsin Department of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO

Introduction

This portfolio represents the work of an adult who has spent time as a learner in the adult basic skills program at Madison Area Technical College. This adult learner voluntarily chose to use a portfolio as a means of documenting her or his learning.

Our program's use of portfolios as an alternative form of assessment reflects the belief that many significant types of learning cannot be documented and evaluated through standardized tests alone. Our program philosophy includes the assumption that adults should be involved in identifying their own learning goals, selecting learning activities, and evaluating their learning. Portfolio assessment reflects and supports this involvement.

Our approach to portfolio assessment is based on the following definition:

A student portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of a student's efforts, progress or achievement in a given area. This collection must include:

**student participation in selection of portfolio content*
**guidelines for selection*
**criteria for judging merit*
**evidence of student self-reflection*
(adapted from Northwest Evaluation Association, 1990)

Learners do not follow a standardized curriculum in the basic skills program. They pursue an individualized plan of instruction that reflects their need for improved basic skills to achieve diverse academic, occupational or personal goals. Our curriculum materials are diverse, and includes practical, real-life materials as well as more academic texts. The portfolio was designed to accomodate the use of this wide variety of resources. The portfolio demonstrates current abilities and growth in reading and writing skills as they were relevant to the individual learner's goals. Just as importantly, the portfolio also reflects abilities and growth in relevant "learning-to-learn" skills, such as goal-setting and use of varied learning strategies.

This learner's specific goals and overall progress toward those goals are indicated on the summary learning plan included in the portfolio. The portfolio materials provide a detailed assessment and examples of the learner's progress.

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO

Overview

This summary portfolio is one of two portfolios used in the MATC basic skills program. During his or her participation in the basic skills program, the learner kept a *working portfolio* as an ongoing means of documenting his or her learning. On a weekly basis, the learner selected sample learning activities for the portfolio that reflected - in the learner's opinion - important learning events. At periodic conferences, the learner and teacher reviewed the working portfolio materials, jointly assessed evidence of progress, and based on this progress, developed a new or revised learning plan. The results of this conference were also included in the working portfolio, as additional evidence of student learning.

The *summary portfolio* was prepared jointly by the learner and teacher at the end of the learner's participation in the basic skills program. This portfolio is intended to provide evidence of final learning outcomes as well as progress. It includes several types of logs that were kept by the learner to document various learning activities. The portfolio also includes sample learning activities selected jointly by learner and teacher from the working portfolio to represent key learning outcomes. These outcomes were assessed by the learner and teacher in a final conference.

The summary portfolio is primarily intended to be used by the learner. She or he keeps the original copy and decides what other people (outside the basic skills program) may have access to the portfolio. It might be shared by the learner with prospective employers, future teachers, or others with an interest in the learner's achievements and abilities. A copy of the completed portfolio is also kept in the student's permanent file for program evaluation purposes.

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO

Contents

1. Summary learning plan
   (summary of goals, progress over the semester, and future goals)
   (written by student after student-teacher conference)

2. Final collaborative portfolio assessment
   (written by teacher during student-teacher conference)

3. Who I am as a reader/writer/learner
   (written by student after student-teacher conference)

4. Samples of learning activities that support final assessment
   (selected jointly by student & teacher as part of conference and labelled according to learning outcomes)

5. Daily learning log
   (from working portfolio)

6. Outside reading log
   (from working portfolio)

7. Outside writing log
   (from working portfolio)

8. Vocabulary log
   (from working portfolio)

9. Initial writing assessment
   (from working portfolio)

10. Standardized test scores (pre/post)
    (from student's permanent file)

11. Additional pieces and rationale for selection [optional]
    (selected jointly by student and teacher according to anticipated audience for portfolio (self, employer, next teacher, etc)

SUMMARY LEARNING PLAN

Learner's Name: ________________________________ Date: ______________________
Total Hours Attended: ____________________________

GOALS WORKED ON THIS SEMESTER	PROGRESS ON SEMESTER GOALS	FUTURE GOALS
Reading Goals:		
Writing Goals:		
Learning Strategy Goals:		
Other Goals:		

SUMMARY COLLABORATIVE PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Learner Name:________________________________ Date:________________

This form will be completed by the teacher and learner at the summary portfolio conference.
T = Teacher assessment, L = Learner assessment, T/L = Teacher and learner combined assessment

SELECT Mark ones worked on with T, L, or T/L	**LEARNING OUTCOMES**	**INDICATORS OF LEARNING AND PRESENT SKILLS** (state specific examples and assess BOTH indicators of learning and skills for each outcome) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to statement	**PORTFOLIO CONTENTS IN SUMMARY PORTFOLIO** (indicate specific form/sample and date, please tag with label) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to form
T/L	**READING OUTCOMES** (1)Comprehension skills		
	(2)Word knowledge/ Vocabulary		
	(3)Variety of reading		
	(4)Amount of reading		
	(5)Growth of higher level reading skills		

SELECT Mark ones worked on with T, L, or T/L	**LEARNING OUTCOMES**	**INDICATORS OF LEARNING AND PRESENT SKILLS** (state specific examples and assess BOTH indicators of learning and skills for each outcome) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to statement	**PORTFOLIO CONTENTS IN SUMMARY PORTFOLIO** (indicate specific form/sample and date, please tag with label) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to form
T/L	**WRITING OUTCOMES** (6)Purpose and Details		
	(7)Organization		
	(8)Voice/Tone/Word Choice		
	(9)Usage/Mechanics/Grammar		
	(10)Use of writing process and strategies		
	(11)Varied purpose and formsof writing		

SELECT Mark ones worked on with T, L, or T/L	**LEARNING OUTCOMES**	**INDICATORS OF LEARNING AND PRESENT SKILLS** (state specific examples and assess BOTH indicators of learning and skills for each outcome) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to statement	**PORTFOLIO CONTENTS IN SUMMARY PORTFOLIO** (indicate specific form/sample and date, please tag with label) Mark with T, L, T/L prior to form
T/L	**LEARNING TO LEARN OUTCOMES**		
	(12) Ability to self assess		
	(13) Ability to set goals		
	(14) Awareness/use of learning strategies		
	(15) Increase in self direction/motivation and responsibility		

TEACHER SUMMARY COMMENTS: (Please include comments regarding learner over entire period, factors that might have impacted the learning and recommendations for future learning or achievement of other goals.)

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO
LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT
TEACHER CONFERENCE VERSION

BASIC READING SKILLS

OUTCOMES Comprehension skills (identifying facts & understanding)

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning plan (reading goals progress)
: Sample/Reflection guide (What I learned about reading)
: Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Learning log (learning activities done today)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS : ability to understand written material at increasing levels of difficulty
(can identify and recall facts, summarize and explain meaning, etc.)

CURRENT SKILLS	comprehension of reading materials at limited levels (below 6.0 grade)	comprehension of moderate level of difficulty (6.0 - 9.0 grade)	comprehension difficult reading materials 10.0 plus)

OUTCOMES Word Knowledge/Vocabulary

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning plan (reading goals progress)
: Sample/Reflection guide (What I learned about reading)
: Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Learning log (learning activities done today)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)
: Outside reading log (change in type of reading)
: Vocabulary Log
: All student written material (change in vocabulary use)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: number of vocabulary words on log/map
: use of greater variety of vocabulary
: increasing sophistication of vocabulary

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no variety in use vocabulary/words; simple words	some variety; some sophistication	wide variety of use of vocabulary/ sophisticated

OUTCOMES Variety of reading

WHERE TO FIND
: Outside reading log (different types)
: Sample/Reflection guide (variety of samples)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS : reads a greater variety of material across genre and for different purposes

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no variety in reading types & purpose of reading	some variety in reading types	wide variety of reading across types

OUTCOMES Amount of reading

WHERE TO FIND
: Outside reading log (number of entries)
: Sample/Reflection guide (choice/number of samples)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: reads more frequently
: reads greater number of texts/materials

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no reading beyond classroom assignments	some reading beyond assignments for classroom	extensive & frequent reading beyond classroom assignments

OUTCOMES Growth of higher level reading skills
(application, synthesis, analysis, evaluation)

WHERE TO FIND
: Portfolio conference guide (goals)
: Reflection guide (changes making progress)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)
: Sample/Reflection guide (why choose)
: Portfolio learning plan (progress)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: greater ability to apply new information to other situations
: greater ability to identify underlying ideas in body of information
: greater ability to combine new information, synthesize and integrate ideas
: greater ability to evaluate ideas and information

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no use of higher level reading (application, synthesis, analysis, evaluation)	some use of higher level reading (see left)	extensive use of higher level reading (see left)

BASIC WRITING SKILLS

OUTCOMES Purpose and Details

WHERE TO FIND
: Writing Sample guide
: other writing in work folder

WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS
- writing shows improvement in
  - *clarity of purpose
  - *development of ideas
  - *appropriateness for audience and task
  - *use of supporting details

CURRENT SKILLS	does not establish a clear purpose or central theme; lacks clarity of ideas; details random, inappropriate or nonexistent. Minimal responsiveness to audience or task.	exhibits purpose; ideas are fairly clear yet still limited, sketchy or general. Some responsiveness to audience and task. Details are provided but may lack elaboration.	establishes & maintains clear purpose; ideas are developed in depth. Clearly responsive to audience and task. Details relevant, provide supporting information.

OUTCOMES	Organization		
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder		
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *use of transitions *logical sequence of ideas *use of introduction and conclusion *overall unity and coherence *pacing		
CURRENT SKILLS	lacks a clear sense of direction; ideas unconnected/ haphazard; intro or conclusion may be lacking; pacing awkward, may leap from point to point.	organized but some weakness in unity or coherence; transitions used but connections may be weak; does have recognizable introduction & conclusion.	organized from beginning to end; logical progression of ideas, supported by effective transitions; line of thought flows, with an effective intro & conclusion.

OUTCOMES	Voice/Tone/Word Choice		
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder		
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *evidence of personal expression *tone appropriate to purpose *accurate choice of wording *use of precise and specific language *use of natural language		
CURRENT SKILLS	little/no voice evident; tone absent or inappropriate for purpose; language vague, abstract, or incorrect.	evidence of voice; tone appropriate for purpose; language is functional but not engaging or imaginative.	distinctive voice; tone enhances expression; language vivid and engaging.

OUTCOMES	Usage/Mechanics/Grammar		
WHERE TO FIND	: Writing Sample guide : other writing in work folder		
WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS	-writing shows improvement in *usage (tense formation, agreement, word choice) *mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation) *grammar *sentence structure		
CURRENT SKILLS	errors frequent & severe.	some errors and/or patterns of error present.	few errors relative to length /complexity of writing.

OUTCOME Use of writing process and strategies

WHERE TO FIND
: Writing Sample guide
: other writing in work folder
: Outside Writing Log
: Reflection Guide

WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS
- increased use of prewriting strategies (brainstorming, outlining, free writing, concept mapping, etc.)
- writes and revises multiple drafts of writing
- seeks and uses feedback from others more often
- greater use of available resources for writing
- greater ability to identify and correct errors (in own writing and writing of others, instructional activities, etc.)
- individual pieces show greater improvement from first to later drafts

CURRENT SKILLS	little/no use of prewriting,editing, and revising strategies; does not seek/use feedback from others,	some use of prewriting activities; some attempts to edit/ revise; more than one draft; uses feedback in revisions.	regularly uses prewriting; edits/revises as needed; seeks/uses feedback from others.

OUTCOME Varied purposes and forms of writing

WHERE TO FIND
: Writing Sample guide
: other writing in work folder
: Outside Writing Log

WORK THAT SHOWS PROGRESS
- writes for more varied reasons (for self-expression, for work-related purposes, for learning, etc.)
- writes with more varied purposes (to describe, explain, persuade, etc.)
- writes in more varied forms (letters, memos, resumes, forms, essays, etc.)

CURRENT SKILLS	little/no writing; limited forms and few purposes for writing.	writes regularly; different purposes and reasons for writing, somewhat limited in scope; some variety in writing.	writes frequently for varied reason uses variety of forms of writing to accomplish diverse purposes.

LEARNING TO LEARN

OUTCOMES Ability to self assess
(strengths, achievements, limits)

WHERE TO FIND
: Initial interview guide VS. Portfolio conference guide
: Learning Plan (progress) →
: Portfolio conference guide (reading skills/use & goals)
: Reflection guide (easy/difficulties)
: Sample/reflection guide (What I learned)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: becomes more specific in describing strengths, achievements, limits
: more able to support assessment with appropriate examples
: able to assess growing variety of abilities (breadth of assessment)
: awareness of meaningful learning experiences

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no awareness of abilities, need for growth, achievements, improvements; may use global statements or focus on one	some awareness of abilities and needs, achievements & improvement; may lack details and/or breadth	strong awareness of specific/ varied abilities, needs, achievements and improvements

OUTCOMES Ability to set goals

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning Plan
: Portfolio conference guide (goals)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: goals become more specific
: goals become more meaningful/realistic
: able to generate more goals

CURRENT SKILLS	goal setting too broad, sketchy, or non-existent	goal setting occurs but restricted; does not grow/shift over time	goal setting meaningful, expansive, shifts in relevant ways over time

OUTCOMES Awareness/use of learning strategies

WHERE TO FIND
: Portfolio conference guide (learning strategies)
: Reflection guide
: Learning plan (what then how/progress)
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: uses greater variety of strategies
: shows greater awareness of strategies used
: greater ability to select/vary strategy as appropriate to the task

CURRENT SKILLS	little or no awareness, use of limited # of strategies, rote application	some use of varied strategies; some awareness of strategies; some variation to task	uses a variety of strategies as appropriate in many situations

OUTCOMES Increase in self direction/motivation/responsibility

WHERE TO FIND
: Learning plan (type of goals/new goals)
: Reflection guide (next week/changes)
: Learning log (next time)
: Portfolio conference guide
: Teacher anecdotal comments (choose to observe/review)

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
: demonstrates increasing interest and enthusiasm for learning
: takes greater initiative in selecting activities and reading material
: takes greater initiative in assessment activities (selecting samples, etc.)
: increasing confidence in learning abilities

Who I Am as a Reader, Writer and Learner

The purpose of this essay is to give you the chance to describe yourself as a reader, writer and learner for others who might look at your portfolio. Remember that you can decide who these people will be. You might answer the following questions in your essay:

*what does your summary portfolio reveal about you as a reader, writer and learner?
*what are your strengths as a reader, writer and learner?
*what have you learned to do as a reader, writer and learner?
*what are your future goals as a reader, writer and learner?

Date: ____________________

Learner: ________________________________

SUMMARY PORTFOLIO

Additional Sample Rationale

Directions:
You may choose samples of your work to include in your summary portfolio for reasons other than to support the final assessment of your skills. Complete this form for each of these additional samples.

Date: ______________________________

Learner: ____________________________________

Description of Sample: ____

Why I chose this sample for my summary portfolio:

How this sample is similar or different from other pieces in the portfolio:

What this sample shows about me as a learner: